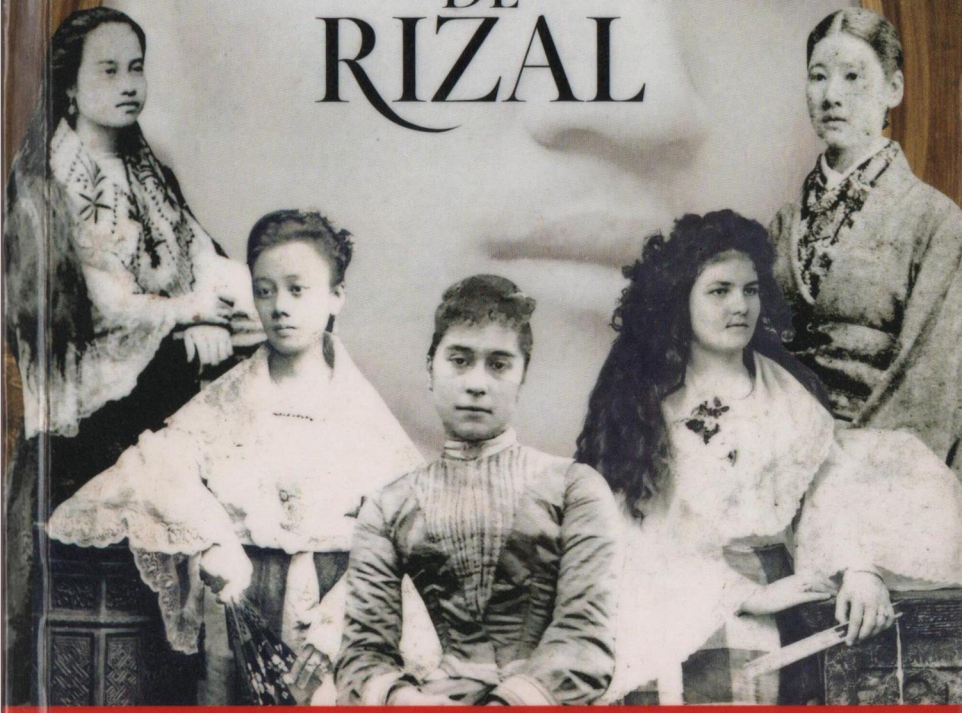
LOOKING BACK 16

ANVIL HISTORY

QUERIDAS DE RIZAL



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Other books by AMBETH R. OCAMPO:

The Paintings of E. Aguilar Cruz (1986)
Rizal Without the Overcoat rev. ed. (2011)
Makamisa: The Search for Rizal's Third Novel rev. ed. (2009)
A Calendar of Rizaliana in the Vault of the Philippine National Library rev. ed. (2011)
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Queridas de Rizal
Looking Back 16

Happy reading!
Ambeth R. Ocampo

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ANVIL
HISTORY

Looking Back 16
Queridas de Rizal

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A Catalogue of Women: Rizal's Loves

WHEN 2011 came to a close, so did the celebration of José Rizal's 150th birthday.

Christmas came, and 2012 followed with the commemoration of Melchora Aquino's 200th birthday. We know little about the so-called Grand Old Dame of the Philippine Revolution and mostly remember her for the bustling Quezon City street named after her nickname "Tandang Sora." She was born on January 6, 1812, the Feast of the Three Kings in the Catholic calendar. This trio described as Magi in some sources or astrologers in others followed a star leading to Bethlehem and the Christ Child in a manger. They paid homage and presented gifts of: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Their names are not recorded in the gospels but they are traditionally known as Melchior, Gaspar, and Baltazar.

Gender in Spanish names have boys with an "o" at the end and girls an "a." María is feminine, Mario masculine the same with Teresa/Tereso, Escolástica/Escolástico. With other name endings the "a" remains feminine. Jesus (pronounced with an "h") is masculine, Jesusa (as in Susan Roces) is feminine. Josefa is the feminine form of José, with the diminutive being Josefina or Josefino.

If Melchora Aquino's parents chose Gaspara or Baltazara then our textbook history would ring differently as the "Mother of the Revolution" would then be "Tandang Para" or "Tandang Zara."

Contemplating the names: Melchor(a), Gaspar(a), and Baltazar(a) reminded me of this passage from Rizal's journal written shortly before he left for Europe in 1882:

"Leonores, Dolores, Úrsulas, Felipas, Vicentas, Margaritas, et al. Other loves will hold your attention and soon you will forget the traveler. I'll return, but I'll find myself alone, because those who used to smile at me will save their charms for others more fortunate. And, in the meantime, I fly after my vain idea, a false illusion perhaps.

"May I find my family intact and afterward die of happiness!"

In the Philippines, "*querida*" refers to a mistress. Synonyms are "*kabit*," "Number 2," "*kulasisi*," etc. In this book, we use the original Spanish meaning "dear" or "beloved" that's why it has a feminine form, *querida*, and a masculine *querido*. Many women were "dear" to Rizal, these include his mother and nine sisters so the list is quite long. The list of "girlfriends" begins with not one but two named Leonor: Leonor Rivera or "Taimis" and Leonor Valenzuela or "Orang." It continues on with: Segunda Katigbak, Consuelo Ortiga y Rey, Osei-san, Gertrude Beckett, Nellie Boustead, Suzanne Jacoby, ending traditionally with Josephine Bracken. All nine

women are referenced in Rizal's writings, but who was Dolores, Úrsula, Felipa, Vicenta, Margarita, and the others who used to smile at Rizal? Are they lost to history and an inquiring gossiper like me?

Nine women romantically linked to the national hero are easily found on the internet, others may well be more obscure but readily available with some research into stray references in Rizal's writings. Many are names lost to history. For example, a woman he encountered while she was chasing butterflies who we only know as "M" or "Minang." There was a prostitute in Vienna who has become, for the overly imaginative, the missing link in the great urban legend that makes Rizal the father of Adolf Hitler. Then there is the woman hidden under the letter "L" whom he visited after jilting his first love Segunda Katigbak:

"I spent the two nights that followed this day in visiting, together with L., a young woman who lived toward the east in a little house at the right. She was a bachelor girl older than we were. She was fair and seductive and with attractive eyes. She, or we, talked about love but my heart and my thought followed [Segunda] K[atigbak]. Through the night to her town...my father, who had learned about our visits, prohibited us from continuing them, perhaps because the name of the Oriental maiden did not figure in his calculations. I did not visit her again."

Since my book *Rizal Without the Overcoat* was first published in 1990, my publisher has held on to my promise to deliver the definitive work on Rizal's women. Unfortunately, that book remains unfinished because research remains incomplete. When did Segunda Katigbak marry Manuel Luz? When did Leonor Rivera marry Charles Henry Kipping? When did they pass away? Where are they buried? I have visited many cemeteries for research following the advice of the late E. Arsenio Manuel and Esteban de Ocampo, who stressed the importance of copying dates of birth and death off tombstones. All these women had a life before and after Rizal, but the material has proven very elusive.

Rizal left us with a correspondence of close to a thousand handwritten letters in four groupings: letters to and from his Family, members of the Propaganda Movement, Ferdinand Blumentritt, and a volume deemed "Miscellaneous" for people who defied classification. Rizal's women are all lumped under "Miscellaneous Correspondence." Here we find: two letters from Leonor Rivera, two letters from "Petite Suzanne," four letters from Nellie Boustead, and two from Josephine Bracken. We only have the letters from the women, none from Rizal. This is significant, why didn't he keep copies as he did the rest of his correspondence? Did Rizal destroy these letters, or did family or compilers of his papers edit them out? We will never know.

Some of the essays in this compilation originally appeared in early editions of *Rizal Without the Overcoat* as a whole section "The Women." This was deleted presuming I would expand them in a definitive book. Sad to admit but over three decades since, other things got in the way: teaching, lecturing, government service, and now the Covid pandemic. Each time I open my notes, I realize that what I dug up only led to more questions than answers. As you can see from this compilation, there is a lot on Josephine Bracken that remains to be found, so I share some of the primary sources here.

Querida, in the Philippines, refers to a mistress. In its original Spanish sense, however, *querida/querido* means someone beloved or cherished. It is in this light that I share these essays as appetizers for the definitive book on Rizal's loves that I will work on in retirement.

AMBETH R. OCAMPO
12 September 2021, Feast of the Holy Name of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Woman Who Could Have Been Mrs. José Rizal

WHEN the six volumes of José Rizal's correspondence came off the press in the 1930s, one of the most interesting photos reproduced in the series was that of Leonor Rivera, Rizal's fiancée and the woman he would immortalize as María Clara in his *Noli Me Tángere*. As in most studio portraits of the time, Leonor was in her best clothes, leaning on a pedestal without a smile. The back of the photo had the innocent inscription, "To José from his faithful cousin at fifteen years, eight months and twenty-seven days. Leonor Rivera."

Another inscription is to be found in the same photograph using a code Rizal often used in his student diary and correspondence with Leonor. Deciphered, it reads "*A mi inolvidable y amadísimo amante; le dedica este retrato su apasionada*" signed with Leonor's codename, Taimis. (To my unforgettable and dearest lover this picture is dedicated by his devoted Taimis). This dedication is pregnant with meaning and has been interpreted either as a breathless love or a teenage infatuation. Unfortunately, Rizal and Leonor Rivera leave us in the dark as to the details, their intimate correspondence burned, leaving a big gap in an important phase of Rizal's personal life. But that is going ahead of the story.

Leonor Rivera at 15 years, 8 months, and 27 days of age, a photograph presented to her faithful cousin José Rizal. On the back is a coded message that, translated from the original Spanish reads: "To my unforgettable and dearest lover this picture is dedicated by his devoted Taimis."

Traditional Courtship

Born in Camiling on April 11, 1867, to Rizal's uncle, Antonio Rivera and Silvestra Bauson, Leonor Rivera was a student boarding at the *Colegio de la Inmaculada Concepción*, more popularly known as the *Colegio de la Concordia* in Santa Ana where Rizal's sisters also studied. Rizal staked his claim quite early—he met Leonor sometime in 1880 when she was thirteen and got engaged to her before she turned fifteen! Why? Tradition made it difficult for a prospective groom to marry a girl in those times because one had to render "service" to the girl's family like chopping firewood or carrying water from a well to her house. In upper-class families such as the Rizals and the Riveras, the manual labor was dispensed with, but one entered an intricate courtship with long delays for engagement and an equally excruciating wait for the parents' consent to the marriage.

Despite this engagement, Rizal left suddenly and in utmost secrecy that even his parents did not know about it till he was en route to Spain by commercial steamer. This made of Rizal and Leonor a long-distance relationship, by snail mail. Even in Manila, Rizal and Leonor wrote to each other in code to avoid their letters falling into the wrong hands and being teased by relatives and friends. After Rizal left the Philippines in 1882, they corresponded for six years but never saw each other again. Some literary critics believe María Clara is not a clear character in the *Noli Me Tángere*

simply because Rizal had forgotten what Leonor Rivera was like. Even if he carried a photo of her abroad, he could not even remember what she looked like after a few years!

José Cecilio one of Rizal's friends kept him updated on Manila news, on October 19, 1882, he reported:

> I am going to dedicate a paragraph to the woman who loves you most in the world and she is the one of the Orient. What tears this poor woman shed during the first day after her return from her town and did not find you in the house but five thousand leagues away from Manila! Your sister, Maria, can tell you about her because she cried in her presence.
>
> One day she told me that she had no humor for anything now, not even for her most intimate friends and she wanted to dye all her clothes black. I replied that she must not despair because the years are fleeting and above all she must console herself for when you left one of your greatest regrets, if not the only one, was to have to separate from her. We have to console her somewhat ...

Leonor was always sickly and this was attributed to their separation. In the 1950s this would be diagnosed a case of "love-nat" and prescribed with a liberal dose of "kiss-pirin."

Separation

As early as January 1884 Rizal, in his usual way, had a presentiment that Leonor was being unfaithful. In an interview, Dr. Carlos Romulo Kipping: grandson of Leonor Rivera and Tarlac governor for a month during the 1986 local elections, explained that by the time Rizal returned to the Philippines in 1887, their relationship had wilted because of the long separation and it was not allowed to bloom again. The Rizal who left in 1882 had returned in 1887 as the subversive and heretical author of the *Noli Me Tángere*.

By then the Riveras had moved from Intramuros to Dagupan, making it difficult for the lovers to meet. Rizal's father forbade him from visiting Leonor because his association with her could jeopardize the Riveras. Leonor asked to tag along with her father to Manila but was not allowed to travel to Manila nor Laguna during Rizal's brief stay. As obedient children they reluctantly followed their parents' orders, leaving Rizal extremely guilty for ruining Leonor's life.

According to family lore, Rizal had a secret pact with his brother, Paciano, who financed his studies abroad. Both vowed to dedicate themselves to helping the country and agreed that only one of them could get married. Since José was the younger and more educated of the two, he gave up his chance at marriage. Rizal was

being watched by the Spanish authorities and with the friars lobbying for his prosecution, the governor-general himself advised Rizal to return to Spain as he could not withstand protect him much longer.

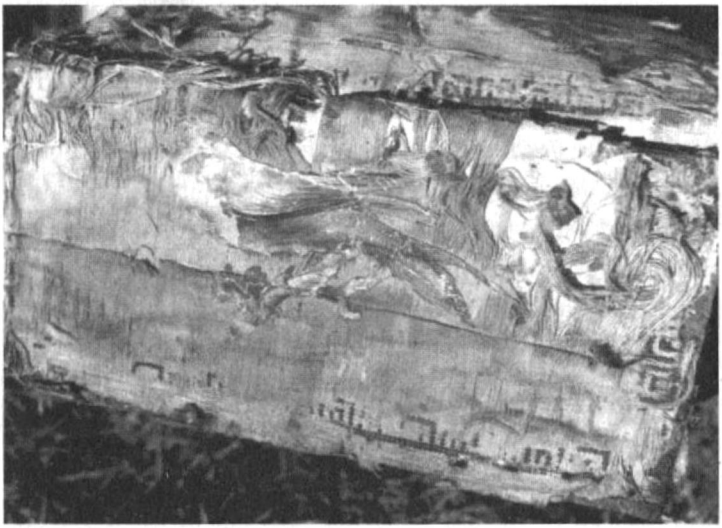
When Rizal insisted on marrying Leonor despite Paciano's warning that if he stayed in the country in pursuit of Leonor, all their plans would be thwarted by his eventual arrest and imprisonment. Paciano lost his temper and is quoted as saying in the presence of their sister Narcisa, "*Iniisip mo lang ang iyong sarili!*" (You're only thinking of yourself!) That curt remark, reminded Rizal of the greater things they had planned. He packed his bags and returned to Europe.

Rizal wrote to Leonor as soon as he arrived in Europe but received no reply. When this became a steady pattern, Rizal thought Leonor was angry, or worse, had forgotten him. Dr. Kipping revealed the conspiracy to break Rizal's engagement to Leonor: Leonor's mother bribed the local postman to give her all of the letters Leonor mailed to Rizal. Likewise, all of Rizal' s letters to Leonor were intercepted by the postman.

Enter Charles Henry Kipping

In the late 1880s Leonor was courted by Charles Henry Boniface Kipping (born January 16, 1860, died December 8, 1896), an English engineer working on the Manila-Dagupan Railway, and despite Leonor's objections, her

mother encouraged the Englishman's visits because, Dr. Kipping adds, "Leonor's parents saw a brighter future for their daughter in this prosperous English engineer with the bushy eyebrows than in Rizal. No one thought Rizal would become the national hero. At the time, he was against the government and you could say he was like [NPA] *Kumander* Dante [Buscayno] today."



The empty box that is said to have contained the ashes of the Leonor-Rizal letters that family lore says was gathered and sewed into the hem of Leonor's wedding dress.

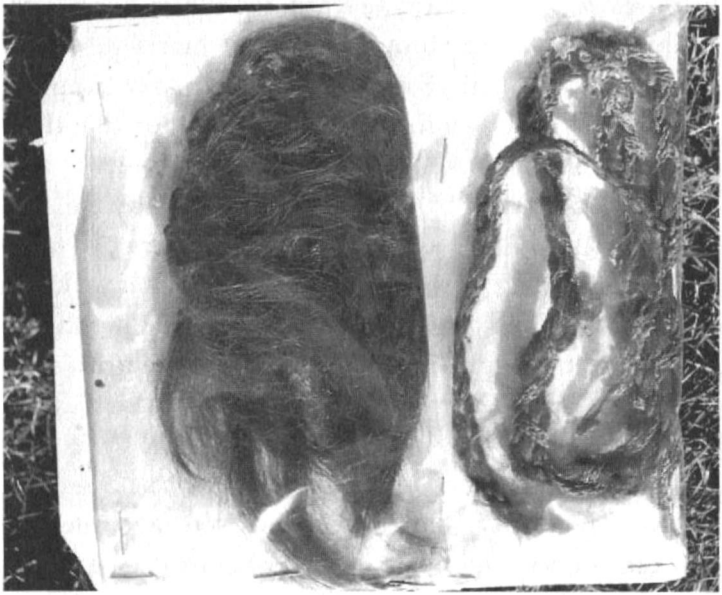
Thinking that Rizal had forgotten her for someone else in Europe, Leonor agreed to marry Kipping. Austin

Coates gives a slightly different but more dramatic version in *Rizal: Philippine Nationalist and Martyr*. After Leonor had agreed to marry Kipping in 1890, the post office relaxed its vigilance so that when Leonor's mother was away in Manila one of Rizal's letters got through to Leonor, who realized that Rizal still loved her. With uncharacteristic nerve, Leonor confronted her mother, who then gave her all of the unopened letters intercepted by the postman. Despite the truth, literally in her hands, Leonor still pushed through with the marriage out of filial piety. She had given her word to marry Kipping, and she had already informed Rizal, in a letter, that their engagement was broken by her coming marriage.

Rizal, according to people with him at the time, was devastated by the news of Leonor's marriage. He cried like a child after reading her letter, one of the few times we know that he was driven to tears. It took him several months to confide in his best friend, Ferdinand Blumentritt, who consoled him by saying Leonor did not deserve Rizal's love:

> After all the misfortune that has befallen you, now your beloved abandons you. My wife can't understand how a woman whom a Rizal has honored with his love could abandon him; she is indignant at that girl. I myself am very sorry, but only for your sake because I know how your heart aches. But you're one of the heroes who overcome

the pain of wounds inflicted by a woman because you pursue more lofty ends. You have a brave heart and a more noble woman looks at you lovingly: your native land. The Philippines is like one of the enchanted princesses of German Folklore, the prisoner of an ugly dragon waiting for a valiant knight to liberate her.



Leonor Rivera's hair photographed in Camiling, Tarlac in 1986. In Victorian times human hair was kept as souvenirs in lockets or small picture frames, the braided one on the right could be worn like a bracelet.

Leonor set two conditions for the marriage: first, that she would never play the piano nor sing again; second, that her mother would stand by them during the church ceremony. Dr. Kipping added that Leonor "wanted her mother to stay with them all her married life, except in the bedroom, naturally."

All of Rizal's letters were kept in a box on which Leonor had embroidered the letters "J" and "L." When mere possession of letters from Rizal could be grounds for prosecution or imprisonment, Leonor burned all of Rizal's letters and kept the ashes in her little box. It is said that shortly before her wedding, Leonor gathered the ashes of Rizal's letters and sewed them in the hem of her wedding dress, so that as she walked down the aisle she could tread the crumbling remains of her first love.

Married in 1890, Leonor gave birth to a son, Carlos, and died giving birth to a daughter in 1893. Though most biographers say that Rizal and Leonor never met again, some members of the Rizal family claim that before Rizal's exile in Dapitan, he visited Leonor in Dagupan, scolded her for marrying Kipping, and left in a huff after Leonor fainted in front of him. At any rate, when Rizal's mother and two sisters arrived in Dapitan in August 1893 and informed him of Leonor's death, Rizal stayed in his room for a day, brooding, while fondling a lock of Leonor's hair similar to the one I saw on display in 1986 together with other deteriorating relics in the Leonor Rivera Museum in Camiling, Tarlac.

The Other Leonor

LEONOR Rivera's tragic story is incomplete if one does not read the gossipy letters from Rizal's friend and *tucayo* (namesake) José M. Cecilio. These are particularly revealing for the details about Rizal's fiancée and other mutual friends, most of them women. The confidential nature of these letters is borne out by the fact that Cecilio mentions certain people only by their initials or codenames.

One hopes that better images of Leonor Valenzuela turn up at auction one day, preferably an image of her in her youth when she was described as "the winsome Orang."

Long quotes about "Leonor" in the letters have to be read closely because they refer to not one, but two different Leonors. It seems Rizal was "engaged" to both.

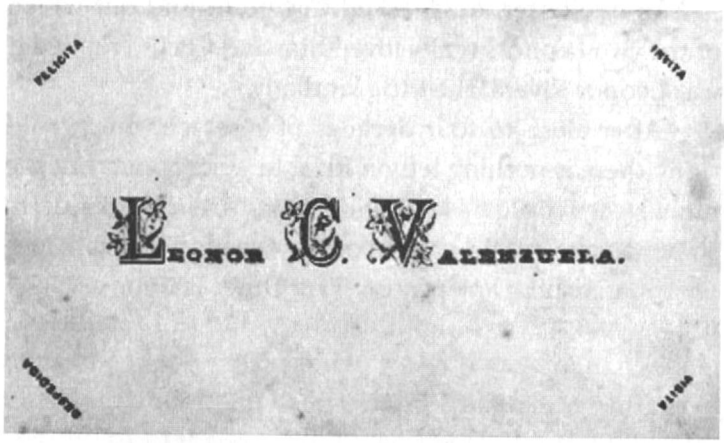
In 1884 Ceferino de León, one of Rizal's classmates, had a crush on Leonor Rivera but held off, knowing that she was Rizal's fiancée. Accompanied by Cecilio, he was introduced and fancied Leonor Valenzuela, but when he attempted to court her he was again discouraged because she was also engaged to Rizal! Poor De León thus asked how Rizal could be engaged to two beautiful women and abandon them for studies abroad. Rizal was then dubbed "Doble Leonor" (Double Leonor). In jest, a historian explained that Rizal worried about talking in his sleep, and to avoid Leonor Rivera discovering the names of his other loves it was best if all of them were named Leonor!

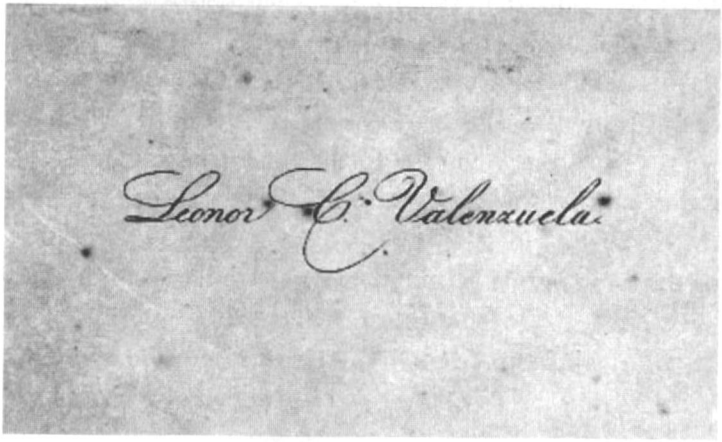
In the Rizal-Cecilio correspondence, Leonor Rivera is referred to as "the little landlady," since her father ran a boarding house in Intramuros, while Leonor Valenzuela was called "the winsome Orang." Both women, judging from Cecilio's observations, were in love with Rizal, but Orang more so. Cecilio was privy to Rizal's love life during this period. As a matter of fact, Cecilio was even appointed Rizal's proxy for visits to Orang!

To date, I am still trying to figure out the codes in the letters of José M. Cecilio, like these from a letter of August 1882:

We played tresiete (T..., O..., Galicano [Apacible?], and I), but afterwards O ... spread out her cards and asked me to bet on one of them. Without hesitation I bet you on a horse against one five and I won. Then I told her that it was a clear proof that what I told her about her love affairs were true. I don't know if she understood that you were the proxy of S ... but I informed her that he was present and she knows too well who he is.

T..., your intimate friend, how she remembers the things that you used to do when she was single. She requests me to give you a pinch of her F..., born after your departure from this capital city. They asked me how long were you going to stay there and I answered them that at least ten years and when you returned you could make love to F ... Then Orang, Candeng, Chengoy, and Titay, who were present, answered that you would kiss their hands ... I rejoined that there was no other remedy, but Mariano, brother of Mentang, split the subject in the middle saying that it could not be so for the reason that you ought to have two objects. Here Troy burned. All of them, including Capitana Sanday, send you their most affectionate regards and Orang wishes you to find there a good-looking girl.





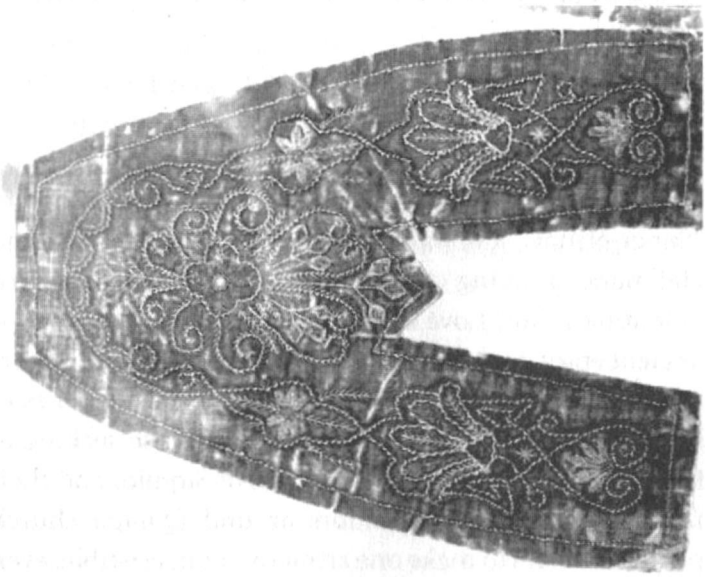
These two calling cards turned up at auction recently at Leon Gallery that specializes in Historical Relics: manuscripts, photographs, furniture, books, and ephemera.

In one letter, Rizal asked Cecilio to find out which of the two Leonors really loved him and Cecilio replied it was Leonor Rivera, the little landlady.

After close to four decades of research, one would think there is nothing left on Rizal to write about, but the more I learn the less I know. Someday, with more research, someone may fill the gaps in our knowledge of Rizal's love life by publishing an essay on "The Other Leonor."

A Letter from Leonor a.k.a. "Taimis"

DID Filipinos have a special day for lovers before Socorro "Super Nanay" Ramos of National Book Store imported Hallmark greeting cards and sold us the modern Valentine's Day? Love stories abound in our history, our ancient epics, legends, and folktales but did our ancestors celebrate something before "VD"? We do have shrines to fertility like Obando, but no shrine for those seeking to find or keep love, except the witches of Siquijor and their famous love potions. Vendors around Quiapo church peddle amulets to make one attractive or irresistible, even bottled herbal concotions whose labels leave nothing to the imagination: *Pampalaki, Pampatigas, Pamparegla* (best left untranslated). Another popular love charm is a small metal image of the *Santo Niño* (Holy Christ Child) nude and sporting an erect penis. Is there a church in the Philippines under the patronage of St. Valentine, who was a Roman Christian, named Valentinus in Latin, martyred by beheading?



One of the curious relics in the Alfonso T. Ongpin Rizaliana Collection, donated to the National Historical Commission, are the embroidered slippers Leonor made for Rizal.

Nobody seems to get tired of reading about Rizal's many loves. The *Inquirer* recently published an article on the little-known Consuelo Ortiga y Rey who flirted with Rizal in Madrid, messed with his feelings, and played our hero with another expatriate Filipino named Eduardo de Lete. She was a cruel woman who ended up loveless. And yet, Rizal composed one of his most beautiful poems for her, a poem simply called "A la Srta. C. O. Rey." My

problem with Consuelo is that I have come to doubt the authenticity of her so-called "diary" published by the José Rizal Centennial Commission because we have no copy of the original manuscript nor do we know how this came into the hands of Eduardo de Lete a "frenemy" of Rizal. The same can be said about the manuscript "Description of My Life" allegedly by Josephine Bracken, that is not in her hand, nor does it contain her usual spelling and grammatical errors.

Leonor Rivera burned all her correspondence with Rizal, an act that makes romantic people swoon and historians wail. Some things, I guess, just have to be kept private.

Fortunately, a handful of letters Leonor wrote to Rizal can be found in the National Library. These give us a sense of her personality and her relationship with a man who, depending on the family tree you are using, is either her cousin or nephew.

On January 2, 1881, when Rizal was 19-years-old he received this from Leonor:

> Esteemed Friend,
>
> I received your letter dated 30 of last month and I am informed of its contents.
>
> If I have not answered your letters, it was not because I'm bored corresponding with you. In fact, twice I wrote replies, but on the day I

did so, nobody came to visit me at the college, so I destroyed them, and besides I was already embarrassed.

I am doubtful if the letter is yours, because the signature is different. Perhaps you have put another name, fearing that I might despise it and if I despise it, it will not be your name that will be despised but somebody else's. If that is what you think, you are mistaken for you do not know how glad I am when I receive one of your dear letters; but you did well in putting another name in case, as you say, it may fall into the hands of strangers.

Leonor signed her letter "Taimis" that makes us wonder about all this secrecy: the use of pseudonyms, changing the look of penmanship, the fear that their letters would fall into unfriendly hands and their love exposed. On December 28, 1881, she wrote Rizal and complained:

I was very much surprised that you had a letter for Papa and none for me; but at first when they told me about it I did not believe it, because he did not expect that a person like you would do such a thing. But later I was convinced that you are like a newly opened rose, very flushed and fragrant at the beginning, but afterwards it begins to wither. Before, however, when I did not write you, you

wrote me, but now no more. It seems that you have imitated my example when I went to Antipolo and you have done wrong, because I was not at my own house, and besides you know very well that you cannot hide any thing from those girls. I could very well write to Papa, but in order that you might not say anything, I did not, though Mama had ordered me to do so. You cannot have these pretexts because you are at your home and nobody meddles with you. Truly I tell you that I'm very resentful for what you have done and for another thing that I'll tell you later when you come.

Excuse the writing and all the mistakes you find in it. Command at your pleasure your true servant who kisses your hand.

These letters sound very immature and lead some to conclude that it is all puppy love, not something that would have matured into marriage. But then courtship, engagement, and marriage in the 19th century are so alien to our times that they sound like the customs of a foreign country. It is unfortunate that we do not have the rest of the letters to complete the picture. From Rizal's correspondence, we know he was engaged to Leonor who was the only woman, with the exception of Teodora Alonso, who could make the national hero cry or melt like butter.

Rizal's First Love

THERE is no better way to see Rizal as a typical love-smitten adolescent (with pimples?) than to read his *Memorias de un Estudiante de Manila* (Memories of a Manila Student), in the wonderful translation from the original Spanish by León Ma. Guerrero. This juvenilia covers his birth and early years to 1878. In it you will find, in great detail, Rizal's first crush on a 14-year-old "virginal, attractive, and engaging" girl named Segunda Katigbak, whom he describes as "not the most beautiful woman I had ever seen, but I have not met another more alluring and beguiling." Rizal even mentioned that "from time to time she looked at me, I blushed."

Segunda, referred to in his diary as "K," was a boarding student at the *Colegio de la Concordia* where his sisters and his future fiancée Leonor Rivera also studied. Rizal used his sisters as an excuse to visit "K" and in one of these visits, they talked about flowers and "K" asked him if he had a girlfriend.

He replied, "No, I never dreamed of having one because I know pretty well that nobody would pay any attention to me, especially the pretty ones.

"K" answered, "What? You deceive yourself. Do you want me to find you one?"

Rizal said, "Thanks, señorita, but I do not want to bother you."

This photo should be seen with Rizal's description of Segunda when they first met: "She was about 14 years old, fresh, pleasant, *simpática* … She was short, with expressive eyes, ardent at times, and drooping at other times, pinkish (*rosada*), with a smile so enchanting and provocative that revealed some very beautiful teeth; with an air of a sylph, I don't know what alluring something was all over her being. She was not the most beautiful woman I had seen, but I had never seen one more enchanting and alluring."

The visits continued until Rizal accepted the reality that "K" was engaged, yet he could not resist her charms. In one visit, she gave him a white rose for his hatband, saying that the flower came from Rizal's sister. During his next visit, Rizal asked her about the rose, saying that his sister was incapable of making such, so "K" told him the truth and he promised to keep the rose as long as he lived, adding, "Do you know it is very painful for me to lose you after having known you?" She tearfully answered, "But I am not getting married!" She stopped short of telling Rizal she really loved him. He confided his doubts in his diary:

> Our visits continued. I abstained, rather, I forbade my heart to love ... perhaps she really loves me ... I am not rich or handsome; I am neither sophisticated nor attractive ... I adopted a course of silence, determined that until I should see greater proofs of sympathy between us, I would not subject myself to her yoke, or tell her that I love her.

News of the courtship spread, and before long all their friends and relatives were talking about them. Rizal was shattered, for all they had at this point, in the modem idiom, was simply an "understanding." It was not yet "serious." This may explain why his letters to Leonor

Rivera (Taimis) were written in code and with codenames to avoid discovery and all the fuss.

With Segunda, it seems Rizal avoided an explicit declaration of love. "I spent the night ... without being able to fall asleep, distracted by my thoughts. My rebellious heart ... refused to express itself and thus to submit, fearful perhaps of confiding its happiness to hands so frail."

One day, "K" received a letter from her father ordering her to return to their province. Even Rizal knew they would be separated. The good news was that her family would visit a fiesta in Laguna and they could see each other there. A significant pattern with Rizal makes its first appearance here, because when he becomes close to a woman, or to a point of "intimacy," he runs away. On the day of her arrival, Rizal saddled his horse and rode off to meet her. Yet when he saw her:

> All I did was to take off my hat. I said nothing. The same thing has happened to me at the most trying moments of my life! My tongue so glib at other times, falls silent when my heart overflows with feeling ... at critical moments in my life, I have always acted against my heart's desire, obeying contradictory purposes and powerful doubts ...This is how it ends.
>
> Ah, how much truth was once instinct in

> these words! Ended, my adolescent and confident loves! Ended, at an early hour, my first love! My virgin heart will always mourn the reckless step it took ... my illusions will return, yes, but indifferent, uncertain, ready for the first betrayal on the path of love ... I realized that she was the woman who satisfied completely the yearnings of my heart, and I told myself that I had lost her.

Does all this sound mushy enough for a contemporary Tagalog "rom-com" (romantic comedy)? One cannot imagine theNational Hero going through all this, but then he was young once.

Rizal on *Walang Forever*

ONE of these days I must visit *Casa de Segunda* in Lipa, Batangas, the home of Segunda Katigbak, who would have remained an obscure or forgotten 19th century Filipino woman if not for her being José Rizal's first love. The little we know of her is that she was born circa 1865, making her four years younger than Rizal. She married Manuel Luz on January 12, 1879, and died on January 16, 1943. One of my regrets is that all the years I knew the late National Artist Arturo R. Luz, I never asked him about his grandmother Segunda Katigbak.

An unfinished Rizal biography I have put on the back burner for many years is written in interview form: I ask questions, and Rizal's replies are drawn from the 25 volumes of writing he left behind. The part on Segunda reads in part:

> ARO: You met Segunda Katigbak through her brother Mariano, right? It began in the summer of 1877, an affair that spanned April to December, while you were then living in a boarding house on Solana street in Intramuros. What do you remember of your first meeting with Segunda? You met in the house of your grandmother in Trozo, right?

Arturo R. Luz (1926-2021), National Artist for the Visual Arts was the grandson of Segunda Katigbak. One of my regrets is that I had many conversations with Luz over the years on a wide range of topics from minestrone soup to Leica cameras and I never got to ask him about his lola.

JR: She was about 14 years old, fresh, pleasant, *simpática*, who received my friend Mariano with much familiarity, from which I had deduced that she might be his sister. I already had heard [she] was going to marry a relative whose name I didn't remember. In fact, we found there a tall man, dressed nicely, who seemed to be her fiancé.

She was short, with expressive eyes, ardent at times, and drooping at other times, pinkish (*rosada*), with a smile so enchanting and provocative that revealed some very beautiful

teeth; with an air of a sylph, I don't know what alluring something was all over her being. She was not the most beautiful woman I had seen, but I had never seen one more enchanting and alluring.

They told me to sketch her portrait, but I excused myself because, really, I didn't know how. Finally they compelled me and I drew a grotesque picture (*un mamaracho*). I played chess and, whether due to the lady with her fiancé or I was distracted seeing her or I was flattered or I don't know, but the fact was, I lost!

Now and then she looked at me and I blushed. At last they talked about novels and other things about literature, and then I took part in the conversation to advantage.

ARO: You devote a whole chapter in your student diary to your courtship of Segunda. You even recorded bits of conversation. Can you share the one when you visited her at the *Colegio de la Concordia* where your sister Olimpia was also a boarder?

JR: I don't remember how our conversation began, but I remember that she asked me what flowers I liked best. I told her that I liked all, but that I preferred the white and the black ones. She told me that she liked the white and pink ones, and she became pensive; but later she added: "Yes, I also like the black ones."

I kept quiet.

"Do you have a sweetheart (*novia*)?" She asked me after a moment of silence.

"No," I replied, "I never thought of having one because I know well that no one would pay attention to me, least of all the pretty ones."

"How is that possible? You deceive yourself! Do you want me to find one for you?"

"Thanks, Miss," I told her, "but I don't want to bother you."

I remembered at that moment that she would marry her uncle the following December, and then I asked her: "Won't you retire to your town in December?"

"No," she answered me dryly.

"They say that in your town a very big feast will be celebrated in which you will take an important part, and it is possible that this will not push through without your attendance."

"No," she replied and she smiled. "My parents want me to return home but I should not like to do so, for I wish to stay in college five years more."

Little by little I was imbibing the sweetest poison of love as the conversation continued. Her glances were terrible for their sweetness and expressiveness. Her voice was so sonorous that a certain fascination accompanied all her movements. From time to

time a languid ray penetrated my heart, and I felt something that was unknown to me until then. And why did the years pass so rapidly that I didn't have time to enjoy them?

Finally when the clock struck seven, we took our leave of our respective sisters and then she said: "Have you any order to give me?"

"Miss, I never had the custom of ordering women," I replied, "I expect them to command me."

We went down the wide staircase of the college and went home. I don't remember how I spent the night then. The time that passed afterward was so painful that the beautiful and sweet were erased from my mind, leaving only black shadows mixed with the tints of tediousness.

Why write a biography when Rizal practically wrote it himself, scattered over 25 volumes of writings that nobody reads?

Osei-san: Rizal in Japan

FILIPINO students take away only one memory of Rizal's short trip to Japan in 1888 the name Osei-san. During a stopover on his return to Europe from the Philippines, he stayed six weeks—from February 28 to April 13, 1888 and met Usui-Seiko buried in Zoshigaya cemetery in a Tokyo suburb close to Rikkyo University. It is unusual that Rizal did not write much about his impressions of Japan and the Japanese compared to his travel writing on Europe. What we are left with is found in letters to his family and to his friend Ferdinand Blumentritt, as well as a small notebook in the López Museum and Library.

In one letter to his family he remarked:

"The Japanese are considered as a godless people. I do not know if this is justified. It would be interesting to study this point. There are very few thieves among the Japanese; it is said that the houses are permanently unlocked, the walls are made of paper, and in the hotels one can, in tranquility, leave his money on the table.

"The Japanese are very jolly; no fights are seen on the streets and they are very courteous. Their houses are clean. Beggars are very rarely seen. They are very industrious. What a difference between them and the

religious and superstitious Chinese! If I could stay here a couple of years, I would study all these and I could do it with more facility than a European because I look like a Japanese, and here like in the Philippines they do not have much trust in the European. I regret very much that I do not speak Japanese."

In a letter to Blumentritt, he noted sadly: "Here you have your friend Rizal, wonder of the Japanese, since he has a Japanese appearance, and yet does not understand Japanese."

In Europe he was often mistaken for a Chinese; and in Madrid, Rizal and his Filipino friends would refer to themselves in jest as "inchic." Rizal once remarked that he would be mistaken for a Chinese or Japanese in Europe but never as a Filipino, making him opine that his country should be better known.

Rizal was a bit of an oddity in Japan. He had Asian features but wore Western clothes, and spoke a Western language:

> When I go out in the streets shopping and want to buy something, people stare at me and ill-bred boys laugh at me because I speak so strange a language. There are very few people in Tokyo who speak English, but in Yokohama many speak it. Some think I am a Europeanized Japanese who does not want to be taken as such. That often happens with the half-bred Japanese in the Philippines.

Two studio portraits of Usui Seiko better known to all Filipinos as Osei-san

Not one to run away from a challenge, Rizal learned Japanese on his own and in six weeks had enough of a vocabulary to express what he wanted. Preserved in the López Museum and Library is a small notebook of stitched light paper, which measures 11.4 cm x 6.3 cm and contains 60 pages, its cover marked, "Japón 1888."

The notebook is marred with foxing and, on a few pages, the corrosive ink has burned holes into the paper. Rizal used pencil, pen, ink and brush ink on various pages that contain an assortment of data: drawings, in sketches in Japanese style, addresses in Kobe, train routes and schedules (Nikko-Lago de Chuzen Fuji y distrito Hakone; Nagoya-Kioo-Nara Lac Biwa Roka Kugen +Mih[?] Garden *Jardín de la Fábrica de armas,*), then illegible text in French; shopping lists; lists of book titles; and many others that require more research.

It's a pity that Rizal did not stay in Japan longer and write more about the country. But in a letter to his family he left some prophetic words:

> I have stayed here longer than I intended, for the country seems to me very interesting and because in the future we shall have much to do and deal with Japan.

On the trail of Osei-san

In 2009 Sophia University professor Takefumi Terada

brought me to Hibiya Park, across the street from the Imperial Hotel, to see the bust of José Rizal erected to commemorate his 1888 visit to Japan. From there we went to Zoshigaya Reien or literally Zoshigaya spirit garden/cemetery on the outskirts of Tokyo's commercial and business district to the grave of the woman all Filipinos know as Osei-san.

We visited these two historical sites on June 18, a day before Rizal's 148th birthday and I was disappointed that nobody from the Knights of Rizal or our Embassy spruced it up or left flowers. Rizal's bust in Hibiya Park was ornamented by bird droppings and Osei-san's grave had weeds growing all over it making me wonder what happened to her grandson who in the 1950s was said to be a Japanese diplomat assigned in Switzerland. Maybe she has great-grandchildren but do they visit her grave? Have they been told that her brief relationship with Rizal is one of the highlights of Philippine-Japan relations?

Terada-sensei came armed with a map of the Zoshigaya cemetery and a photocopy of an obscure newsletter that seems to be dedicated to people buried there. This newsletter had a long and detailed article on Osei-san complete with pictures. Terada-sensei was kind enough to translate the material and so far this is as far as we can go on Osei-san.

Her full name was Usui Seiko, her nickname was "O-sei" from Seiko. The Usui family came from Chiba near the present Narita Airport outside downtown Tokyo. Her father was a veteran samurai who turned to business and

ran a trading store in Yokohama. Seiko's older brother was killed in Ueno during the Shogitai revolt against the Meiji. To provide Seiko with a playmate, her parents adopted an orphan from Nagasaki named Yoshi. Seiko had an upbringing that gave her fluency in English and a bit of French. Seiko was described as being shy yet she served as Rizal's interpreter, and accompanied him on sightseeing trips around Japan. Being a woman of "high culture" she introduced Rizal to Japanese culture teaching him to write Japanese characters and paint in the Japanese-style.

After Rizal, she married Alfred Charlton (born August 13, 1859, Liverpool; died November 2, 1915) who was an English teacher in the First High School, then the Yamaguchi High School in Imaguchi later he taught chemistry in the prestigious Gakushuin High School. He was decorated with the Japanese Order of Merit 5th class, indicated on his tombstone. Charlton and Seiko had a daughter named Yuriko who married the son of a senator named Yoshiharu Takiguchi and they had a son (no name) who was a Japanese diplomat assigned in Geneva.

Seiko never told anyone about her friendship with Rizal until the 1950s when Filipino researchers tracked down her stepsister Yoshi who said Seiko collected Philippine stamps and cherished those with had Rizal's picture. Her stamp collection and any mementoes left by Rizal were destroyed during the bombing of Tokyo in 1944. After her home in Shinjuku was destroyed, she

moved to Hagi west of Yamaguchi where she died on May 1, 1947, at the age of 80.

Seiko's grave in Zoshigaya cemetery, Tokyo is marked by a large piece of polished granite that has the initials "A.C" carved on the top and Japanese text that reads "Alfred Charlton, Order of Merit 5th class, and wife Seiko."

Seiko's grave is marked by a large piece of polished granite that has the initials "A.C" carved on the top and Japanese text that reads "Alfred Charlton, Order of Merit 5th class, and wife Seiko." There is a small crooked tombstone beside that of Seiko and Alfred's that marks the grave of Usui Yoshida who was interviewed by the Filipino historians and researchers in the 1950s. This is where our trail ends. It isn't much to go on but gives us a better idea of who she was, what she was like and perhaps helps us understand what in her that Rizal found attractive.

Rizal in London: Gettie and Pettie

FILIPINOS writing about Rizal naturally get the Philippine parts right, but make mistakes when he goes abroad. One of the errors that crept into the six-volume Epistolario Rizalino, published by the National Library in the 1930s, under the direction of T.M. Kalaw is a fine example. Rizal wrote a letter to his sister Trinidad on "11 de Marzo Donnerstag" that the editors filled in as: "11 de Marzo [1886], Donnerstag [Alemania]." You will never find "Donnerstag" on any map of Germany because the word actually means "Thursday." When I was tracing Rizal's footsteps in London, I remember reading that he worked in the British Museum all day and walked back to his rented room in Primrose Hill, Northwest London. His exact address was 37 Chalcot Crescent, best reached from the library not by foot but via the tube from Russell Square to Chalk Farm,on the Edgeware branch of the notorious Northern Line.

Filipinos know that Rizal lived in London but don't really know nor care where. Textbook history tells us how Rizal copied, by hand, the 1609 first edition of Antonio Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* and published his annotated edition in Paris in 1890. We are

also told that his landlord was an organist at St. Paul's and that Rizal flirted with one of his daughters named Gertrude Beckett and from there the lead turns cold. Historian Jim Richardson provides us more leads from British census records:

> The head of the family, a Charles Beckett, is recorded as having been born in the South London district of Blackfriars and as being 36 years old, so by the time Rizal came to stay, he would have been 43 or thereabouts. His occupation is listed as civil servant (government employee), which suggests that he employed his talents as church organist only as a part-time or voluntary basis. Exactly where he played the organ has yet to be established, for there used to be two churches called St. Paul's within a reasonable distance of Chalcot Crescent, one in Avenue Road (near Swiss Cottage) and the other in Camden Square.

With Beckett's full name and occupation firmly established, facts usually absent from our Rizal books, Richardson continues:

> Charles Beckett's wife, Georgina was two years his senior. She came from the small town of Ely in Cambridgeshire, and possibly the couple

may have married and started their family there, for their two eldest daughters, Gertrude and Blanche, are also listed as having been born in Ely.

Gertrude ("Tottie") would have been around 18 when she developed a crush on the handsome Filipino lodger upstairs, an infatuation which he failed to discourage and which reportedly prompted his eventual rather abrupt departure from the house. Blanche ("Sissie") would have been 17 at the time of his stay.

In his letters, Rizal only mentions these two girls by name, the rest of the household remain unknown, but with a bibliographer's patience with microfilm reading Richardson found out a bit more:

The four younger children are all listed as having been born in St. Pancras, the name of the registration district in which Chalcot Crescent was then situated. After Blanche had come the first boy, named Charles after his father, who although only 16 when Rizal arrived had already started work. Then came Florence (14 in 1888), a boy christened Francis (12) and finally Grace (8). Completing the household at the time of the Census was a 16-year old servant girl, Emily Bloxam.

Two studio portraits of Gertrude Beckett, the one of her in Japanese costume is found in Rizal's own photo album now preserved in the López Museum and Library.

Now that we have the names, I hope someone will find their pictures so we can add faces to the names. Richardson also adds that as in Heidelberg, Rizal seems to have been overcharged (cheated?) by his landlord. Rizal paid two pounds a month for his room in the Chalcot Crescent attic at a time that he could have rented a whole house for 35 pence elsewhere.

Did you know that Rizal's pet name in London was "Pettie"? And that his "girlfriend" Gertrude Beckett, the landlord's daughter, was "Gettie"? Their letters were so

revealing that they conveniently "disappeared" to keep our hero's image clean. In his prewar prize-winning Rizal biography Carlos Quirino reproduced one of the Gettie-Pettie letters as follows:

My Dear Mr. Rizal:

I hope you don't think me unkind or forgetful not answering your letter before, but really we have been waiting to hear from you, not knowing if you received your box safely and I wasn't sure if we had the correct address, you are always moving; you are a funny little thing, now suppose if I had come with you, we should have had a dear little room and not apt fidgeting about so.

Do you worry when you never received the first letter I wrote you? I had it returned the other day, wasn't it funny? After such a long time because I wrote it directly after you went, so you would have received it the next morning. Oh, I was so miserable then; I couldn't help writing to you, nobody knew anything about it though. Thank you very much for sending the fashion paper but there are no pretty dresses in it, not half as nice as our English fashions. Have they admitted the bust we made? But of course they have, though you do things so beautifully, they wouldn't refuse it ...

The letter partly explains why Rizal left London in a hurry—things were getting out of hand. He confessed to Antonio Regidor: "I cannot deceive her. I cannot marry her because I have other ties which remind me of our country and do not permit me to marry her. I am not going to commit the indignity of placing passion over a pure and virginal love such as she might offer me."

How noble indeed! Do you believe this? My vulgar twentieth-century mind finds other meanings in the pet names Gettie and Pettie. Do you? This is what (mis) interpretation of primary sources is all about.

Rizal and Prostitution

WHETHER you are talking about your neighbor, your enemy, a politician, or someone who lived 200 years ago, sex never fails to catch people's interest and imagination. Despite the columns I have written about Apolinario Mabini's polio, some people still insist on the *tsismis* that syphilis caused Mabini's paralysis. Readers often request me to elaborate on the sex lives of former Philippine presidents or our heroes. I am always asked if Andrés Bonifacio's widow, Gregoria de Jesus, was really raped by Colonel Agapito Bonzon when they were in captivity, or whether it is true that General Antonio Luna's girlfriend really was Isidra Cojuangco who, entrusted with the money of the revolution, used it to fund what became Hacienda Luisita and became the start of the fabled Cojuangco fortune.

Our heroes have been fossilized in bronze and marble, memorialized in textbook history, and made almost god-like that a previous generation could not even imagine them doing plain human things like eating, drinking, or having fun. No other national hero's personal life has been more dehydrated than Rizal. Dr. Máximo Viola, as every schoolchild knows, was the man who paid

for the printing of Rizal's *Noli Me Tángere*. What you are not told in school though is that Viola kept a diary of a trip they made around Europe in 1887. Rizal stayed with Viola in Barcelona around June or July of 1886 at a time when Viola was preparing for his medical examinations, so Rizal was forced to roam the city alone. Viola explains Rizal's visits to brothels as work rather than pleasure, as research for his novels:

"It can be said that the life of the illustrious traveller in this city had nothing notable about it. He visited without pomp or ceremony... During the day I couldn't accompany him in his excursions as much as I wished, for I was preparing for my final examination. At night I accompanied him sometimes to the Café Pelayo-gathering place of the Filipino expatriates—and sometimes to other amusement centers, including *casas de palomas de bajo vuelo* (in Tagalog, bahay ng mga kalapating mababa ang lipad); in English brothels whose ways, luxury or poverty, and other customs in the refinement of vice were unknown to him in Madrid. In as much as he was eager to know everything, because the day when, as a writer, he would have to combat such a vice in its diverse manifestations for being unnatural and anti-physiological, according to him, he would be informed of its cause the better to correct it. It must be noted that in these excursions, rather of a character more inquisitorial than voluptuous, he always hinted to me

that he had never been in favor of obeying blindly the whims of nature when their call was not duly justified by a natural and spontaneous impulse."

The original Spanish may be florid but it is a dry read, so much the better to veil Rizal's "educational-observation" trips to the brothels. I use a translation by the José Rizal Centennial Commission because if I translate these notes to their bare essentials, it will appear as if I were trying to denigrate Rizal. What one should keep in mind while reading Viola is that these recollections were not written in 1886 but in 1913, many years after the actual events, by then Rizal was already the national hero. This explains why Viola had to paint a dignified picture of his intimate friend.

Viola claims that brothels "were unknown to him (Rizal) at Madrid," but if you take time out to read the volumes of Rizal's correspondence, you will find Rizal's letter to his brother, Paciano, from Madrid dated, February 13, 1883, narrating: "Women abound even more (here in Madrid) and it is, indeed, shocking that in many places they intercept men and they are not the ugly ones either."

I have seen these dark *esquinitas* in Madrid, like *Calle de la Montera*, where my sisters were warned never to cross after six. Here you find pretty young things (but it's hard to see in the semi-darkness) who lie in wait; the ugly ones are aggressive out of despair, so they pull men

off the street into their sleazy little rooms. Not much had changed from Rizal's time to the 1980s when I first explored Madrid. From Rizal's letter it is obvious he knows what he's talking about:

> With respect to morality there are also some who are models of virtue and innocence and others who have nothing womanly—about them, except their dress or at most their sex. Rightly it has been said that the women in the south of Europe have fire in their veins. However, here prostitution is a little more concealed than at Barcelona, though no less unrestrained.

Now, tell me, how can Viola say with a straight face that these "amusements" were unknown to Rizal?

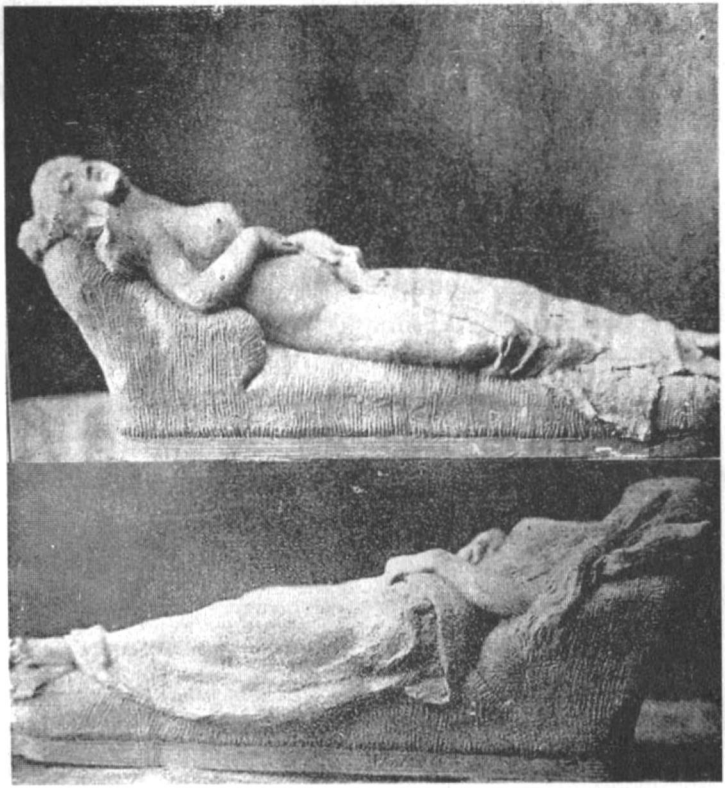
In May 1887, Rizal and Viola traveled together around Europe and it was in Vienna that Rizal "encountered the figure of a temptress in the form of a Viennese woman, of the family of the Camellias or *hetairas* of extraordinary beauty and irresistible attraction, who seemingly had been expressly invited to offer for a moment the cup of mundane pleasure to the apostle of Philippine freedom who until then had enjoyed among his intimates the fame worthy of his glorious namesake, St. Joseph ...With the exception of this case I knew of no other slip of Rizal during more than six months that we were travelling together ...

When I first read the Viola diary in an English translation published by the Philippine Historical Association, the woman Rizal picked up in a bar was a "Viennese countess" not the prostitute described in the original Spanish. Our generation is not as prude, we see no need to hide love and sexuality in our heroes and historical figures. Isn't it their humanity that makes them relevant or relatable to us? Rizal's sex life does not detract from his greatness, but over the years all these attempts to hide Rizal's humanity resulted in the dishonest translation regarding a one night stand in Vienna that resulted in the urban legend that Rizal is the father of Adolf Hitler.

Rizal's "Amusements"

LECHERÍA is a hill outside Calamba where cows once grazed. It later became a cemetery whose most famous "resident" was a man denied burial in the Catholic cemetery simply because he was the brother-in-law of the subversive heretic, José Rizal. Today one can go up the hill to enjoy a breathtaking view of Laguna in the shadow of what once was the tallest Rizal statue in the country. Rizal is depicted carrying a torch, just like the Statue of Liberty, standing on a globe where the Philippines is drawn as the center of the universe. *Lechería* is home to the *Iglesia Watawat ng Lahi* (Church of the Flag of the Race).

Some years ago when I took the eminent Asianist Benedict Anderson on a trip to Calamba, we were told that the Iglesia was undergoing a schism of sorts, resulting in two churches separated by barbed wire and menacing signs telling the members of the "other side" to keep out. Curiosity made us risk the barbed wire, rolling in the mud or getting mauled by warring *Iglesia* members, to keep our neutrality we visited both churches and found their members very accommodating to visitors. It is worth a trip to Calamba on Sunday mornings to attend their services and listen to the head of the *Iglesia* deliver a sermon or *aral*.



Two views, front and back, of a sculpture in clay Rizal presented to Valentín Ventura as a gift. Ventura was intrigued by the identity of the nude model and asked to be introduced.

In the Rizal Shrine, going through the various relics on display, Anderson remarked: "Rizal was quite small, wasn't he?"

"Yes, a little over five feet tall."

Peering into one *escaparate* or display case with a selection of Rizal's clothing, he turned to me and asked, "No underwear?"

I took a second look and pointed at Rizal's long johns. Anderson said, "Of course, he'd need those in the winter, but do you think Rizal wore underwear? I mean in the Philippines? Did Filipinos at that time use underwear?"

I'm almost sure Filipinas did not use underwear, but the men? Being the finicky European fellow that he was, Rizal probably used underwear even in the Philippines. But then I have to ask the curator one day if they have Rizal's underwear in storage. It isn't the type of thing you display in a Shrine, right? All this talk of underwear made me remember the "*kargada*."

Long before ready-to-wear or clothes literally off-the-rack, gentlemen had to see a tailor for measurement and fitting. When pants were being ordered for the first time, the tailor made sure the "fit" of the crotch (i.e., the part in pants or trousers that covers the area between the tops of your legs) was all right by asking, "Saan po ba ang kargada nila, sa kanan o kaliwa?" [where is your *kargada*, right or left?] Tailors had to know this so they could make an allowance of the gentleman's "crown jewels." I mentioned this at a meeting of the National Historical Institute once and saw the senior historians laughing as Teodoro Agoncillo and E. Aguilar Cruz debated on whether Rizal

was Rightist, Leftist, or Centrist? Citing the late National Artist for Sculpture, Guillermo Tolentino, Cruz argued that Rizal's *kargada* lay on the right. Tolentino made a life size wax figure for the prewar U.P. Library that was dressed in the hero's actual clothing supplied by his spinster sister, Trinidad Rizal. Not content with that, I actually inspected Rizal's clothes in the Rizal Shrine Fort Santiago and the NHI stockroom and can affirm that Tolentino was right. Rizal was definitely a "Rightist."

When Rizal was in Brussels, Belgium in 1890, busy editing *El Filibusterismo* for printing in nearby Ghent where costs were lower, he kept correspondence with his friends and occasionally sent them clay statuettes or busts as presents. Rizal sent a clay statuette of a reclining nude to his friend, Valentín Ventura, who replied with thanks and an inquiry:

> Tell me frankly if the woman who served as your model exists in Brussels, because if she does exist, it is worth the trouble to take a trip there if only to admire and make her acquaintance. [However,] if the figurita [clay figure] is dedicated to another person [i.e., has a lover or is married], tell me frankly ...

Ventura was fishing to find out if Rizal was interested in the woman, or maybe in a relationship with her.

Unfortunately, the clay statuette is not extant anymore. All that is left is a prewar photograph of the sculpture that depicts the naked woman reclining on a sofa asleep or in rapture. Who was this woman?

Aside from the above, there are stray references to women in Ventura's letters that might have been prompted by something Rizal said, but alas those letters are not extant. Ventura preferred Western women and maintained two girlfriends in Paris—a blonde and a brunette. In a letter to Rizal dated February 5, 1890, Ventura confessed:

> After having lived eight months in Paris I was afraid that with our great manliness (*hombradas*) you would be bored (in Brussels). But I see that you definitely have the qualities of a traveler, for which I congratulate you, for these qualities will serve you much, so that you would not be married or be chased, which is the same thing. (Italics mine).

What does Ventura mean by "manliness" in this letter? What was in the play of the words "*casar*" (to marry) and "*cazar*" (to chase or hunt)? In the original Spanish, Ventura wrote: " ... *para que no se case V. oque le cacen que es lo mismo*," Ventura teases Rizal for being chased or trapped being into serious relationships.

Rizal seems to have allowed his Kapampangan friends, Valentín Ventura and José Alejandrino a glimpse into his personal life. In Alejandrino's memoirs, *La senda del sacrificio*, he recalls being introduced by Rizal to sisters he regularly visited "for amusement." This short text reads:

> Rizal was a Puritan, but his puritanism was reasonable and without hypocrisies. Having recently arrived in Brussels and not knowing French, I hardly went out of the house. One day he invited me to amuse ourselves [in Spanish "divertir"], telling me that we could pass the time in the house of two sisters whom he knew. There we went and I came to like the amusement because a few days later, I asked him again when we could make another visit. But he became serious and answered me that he considered a good time as necessary once a month, but more than once he considered it already a vice and he was not willing to encourage vices.

By the time Alejandrino published his memoirs, Rizal was already a national hero, with a monument on the Luneta. Alejandrino did not want to taint his friends image and left readers to their imagination. But in private, Alejandrino bragged about Rizal's exploits in

Belgium hinting that these sisters were "*palomas de bajo vuelo*" better understood in Tagalog as "*mga kalapating mababaha ang lipad*." While Alejandrino was not referring to the Jacoby sisters in whose home Rizal found comfortable lodging in the Belgian capital, the story gets confused in re-telling.

Rizal the "Little Bad Boy"

ONE of the perks of being a Rizal scholar are the opportunities to trace the hero's footsteps in various places in the world. In September 2016 I accepted an invitation to speak at the commemoration of the 125th anniversary of the publication of *El Filibusterismo* in Ghent, Belgium. A historical marker was installed in the building where Rizal lodged during the printing of the book by F. Meyer Van Loo located some streets away. There was some embarrassed amusement when the Pinoy Pilgrims posed for a souvenir photograph in front of the building considered the "birthplace of *El Filibusterismo*" because the ground floor was then occupied by a shop selling sexy lingerie.

Upon arrival in Belgium a few days before the event, I spent the night in Eeklo, an obscure town known for UNESCO-declared heritage structures. While off the the beaten track of tourist destinations like Brussels or Bruges, but I made a visit to the home of Lucien Spittael, a retired NATO officer who is a Knight in the Order of Rizal. Spittael's charming home, outside the town center, does not look any different from the neighbors' except that his driveway has a tarpaulin showing the chronology

of Rizal's life and works. Inside the home, he shares with his Filipina wife Madeline Acosta Abordo, is a veritable Rizal museum with pictures, busts, memorabilia, etc. that would put Pinoys to shame. Rizal started as a hobby for him and has grown into an obsession, such that I am sure he knows more about our national hero than the average Filipino.

Suzanne Jacoby ("Aunt Suzanne") has often been mistaken as Rizal's Belgian "girlfriend" when it seems Rizal was friendly with her niece Suzanne Thill ("Little Suzanne") of whom we have no photograph.

Spittaël and I were introduced to each other in Manila, and we have been in correspondence by email for many years. His intensive research on Rizal especially the documenting of the places around Europe Rizal lived in or visited has led to the revision of details in Rizal's life we thought we knew. His most important contribution to Rizal studies concerns Suzanne Jacoby who has been identified in all out textbooks as Rizal's girlfriend in Belgium.

Suzanne does not look very attractive in extant photographs; some people have even commented unkindly that she could have passed for a man! Rafael Palma in his *Biografia de Rizal* (1949) wrote:

> He fled from Brussels to avoid being burned by the call of love. He was also not free from the traps of the eternal femenine, Suzanne J., a pretty young Belgian girl, niece of his landlady, she must have been attracted to him in an unforgettable way. A dozen of her letters are preserved in the National Library, these don't offer much of interest. But there is one, undated, that breathes with a certain familiarity, that must have been written at the time when Rizal had already left Brussels

If Palma saw a dozen letters from Suzanne Jacoby preserved in the National Library of the Philippines in Manila, how come only a third of these were included in

the "Epistolario Rizalino"? The compilation, translation, annotation, and editing of Rizal's correspondence was made under the direction of T.M. Kalaw who must have suppressed the Suzanne letters, because of their intimate content. You will understand why, when you read the letter to Rizal posted by "Petite Suzanne" (Little Suzanne) on Wednesday, Oct. 1, 1890:

My dear Mr. Rizal:

You may not have received yet my letter and I am writing you this one because the young gentleman from Madrid came to our house. He arrived at Brussels at one o'clock and came to the house at night. As it was a little late (10:00 o'clock), we had gone upstairs to bed. Aunt Suzanne and I were both in bed. Aunt Marie was still up.

When he first rang, we thought it was a street urchin, but at the second time Aunt Marie went to open the door and let him in. Then she woke up Monsieur Fernand for whom I believe Monsieur Baudrio has brought a letter. All three were in the kitchen and I could hear very well all that he said. When we heard him speak, we thought it was you and then the name of Monsieur Rizal puzzled us.

I had a hard time holding back Aunt Suzanne. She maintained that you had returned, that it was

you who were in the kitchen, but we did not see you. Monsieur Fernand gave him much information and placed himself at his disposal for other things. All I know about him is that he is taller than you and combs his hair in a different way. But I will see him better, for Aunt Marie has invited him to come again. Then I will ask to talk again about you. He must learn French at once. Aunt Marie asked him if you have become stout, what you were doing, and if you liked Madrid very much.

Monsieur Baudrio replied that you have become stout ... and I believe he also said that you were counting on coming back, which made me so happy that I could not sleep.

Here is already one of your compatriots. Come quickly and bring with you some twenty more and you can hold picnics, too, here in Brussels.

I hope your courts are open and I shall not have to wait a long time for your decision.

Don't delay too long writing us because I wear out the soles of my shoes running to the mailbox to see if there is a letter from you.

Waiting impatiently for your letter in which you will tell me all that I want to know, the whole family sends you regards with wishes for your return.

Your Petite Suzanne

P.S. There will never be any home in which you are so loved as in that in Brussels, so, you little bad boy, hurry up and come back. Tell us a little about the kind of house in which you are lodged and how the people are there.

Such an innocent letter on the surface, but on rereading you may ask: why is Rizal called a "little bad boy" (*petit mauvais sujet* in the original French)? What does she mean by Rizal leaving his courts open? What is the decision she has been waiting for? The letter leaves us with more questions than answers.

Some Rizal biographers confuse the two Suzannes, identifying Suzanne Jacoby as Rizal's "girlfriend" when it was clearly the younger, Rizal was interested in. It is clear from the letters that there were two Suzannes in the house: "Tante Suzanne" (Aunt Suzanne), the sister of Aunt Marie, and their niece who signed her letters "Petite Suzanne" (Little Suzanne) and one with "Suzanne T." In "Great Malayan" Carlos Quirino wrote:

"... he had grown rather attached to the Jacoby sisters and their niece Petite Suzanne ... The younger of the two sisters, whom they called Tante (Aunt) Suzanne, was especially fond of—if not in love with—him. He was so charming and amiable, such a perfect gentleman that women felt attracted to him. Perhaps the fact that he kept himself under leash, restraining amatory impulses,

piqued his feminine friends and served to accentuate their interest. Instead of the hunter, he invariably became the hunted.

"He would not stoop to the love affairs so commonly indulged by those of his sex, because his conscience would not permit such temporary alliances. In his heart he was still faithful to Leonor."

Lucien Spittael's research in the municipal archives in Belgium, led to census records that differentiate: Suzanne Jacoby, aged 46 at the time of Rizal's stay, from her niece Suzanne Thill, aged 18. From this information Spittael rightly identifies Rizal's Belgian "girlfriend" the younger Suzanne Thill not Suzanne Jacoby, as previously believed, who was over a decade older than Rizal.

Nelly Boustead, Antonio Luna, and Rizal

"HENERAL Luna," the 2015 hit film by Jerrold Tarog, makes clear to viewers that Luna's hot-headedness led to his assassination in Cabanatuan in 1899. This fatal trait can be traced a long way back to his years as an expatriate Filipino student in Spain, with two instances worth retelling here.

First, Luna was upset by an attack on his elder brother, the painter Juan Luna, in newspaper articles by a certain Mir Deas. Finding no satisfaction from an official complaint lodged with the Spanish press, he got even by writing an article where he mangled the byline Mir Deas into "Mierdas" (the Spanish word plural for shit). Not content with this, Luna also threatened to challenge Mir Deas to a duel. Knowing his temper, Luna's friends conspired to cheer him up and distract him from his plan. Unknown to them, Luna stalked his prey all around Barcelona and finding him in a café, he walked up to Mir Deas, spat in his face, called him names unprintable here, then, as a final flourish to the public insult, pulled out a calling card from his pocket and threw it at Mir Deas's face as a formal challenge to a duel.

Antonio Luna courting Nelly Boustead from a photo circa 1890. Courtesy Stephen Kansler Collection.

Luna had a reputation as one of the best Filipino swordsmen of his day, and was often called in as a "second" in duels fought to restore honor. However, nothing came of it because Mir Deas refused the challenge and Luna consoled himself with the thought that his opponent was a coward.

Second instance was another would-be duel, this time between Luna and Rizal over a woman they both loved—Nelly Boustead.

In Paris for the centennial of the French Revolution in 1889, Rizal was introduced to a rich Anglo-Filipino mestizo named Eduardo Boustead whose father, Edward Boustead, established in 1826 the firm of Boustead and Company in Singapore and later, in Manila. One of the most successful British East India merchants at the time, Edward married a Filipina in Manila but returned to England in 1851 after leaving the Manila business to his son, Eduardo.

In 1888 Eduardo received news of his father's death and sailed to England to claim his inheritance. Everyone got a surprise when Eduardo popped up, since the English Bousteads had never heard of Eduardo and he did not know about his father's first family. Unable to prove his legitimacy, Eduardo didn't get his inheritance. However, Rizal's British biographer, Austin Coates, thinks Eduardo was given a tidy sum by the English Bousteads provided he never set foot in England again. This explains the opulent lifestyle Eduardo lived both in Paris and his villa in Biarritz. This was the family Rizal almost married into.

Rizal met Eduardo's daughters, Adelina and Nelly, through Antonio Luna, who was courting the latter. Forming a "double date" as we know today, Luna was free to go out with Nelly because Rizal took care of the chaperone, Adelina. So it went for sometime, Luna even baring his secrets to Rizal. At one point the "harmless dates" were revealed to be serious courtship, so Luna had

to apologize to Nelly's parents for betraying their trust. Luna wrote Rizal, "No serious crime has been committed, because love is not a crime, and if we had any fault at all it was that we concealed our love." In the same letter Luna bid his friend farewell as he was leaving to fight a duel in Barcelona. Thinking he would not survive, he asked Rizal to "tell Nelly how much I have loved her."

Luna bared his soul to Rizal, revealing secrets he did not even tell his brother Juan. He asked Rizal for "... some news about Nelly. Does she still love me? ... I have not heard from her. I wrote her a letter 20 days ago ... I should like to know if I am making myself ridiculous by believing candidly in a love that no longer exists. This is really ridiculous ..."

Things got complicated when Luna noticed that Nelly was not falling for him but for Rizal! Due to this conflict of interest, the two men did not mind each other for a while, with Luna later breaking the ice:

"You thought I was cold toward you and I thought you were doing the same to me. It's simple miscommunication...we have no reason to be cold to each other for I asked you many times if you were in love with Nelly and you told me you were not. You even encouraged me to court her, saying that you have commitments to fulfill. . . Thus, I was sure of you, that you were my friend, the rest did not matter to me... we ought to continue as friends as though we never ceased to be friends."

Rizal, Félix Resurrección Hidalgo, and Nelly Boustead. Detail from a group photo taken in Paris, 1889.

Despite this letter, Luna's hard feelings remained. Frankly, I sometimes think Rizal was a snake in the grass in this episode, but then putting myself in his shoes, how does one tell a friend you have fallen in love with his girlfriend? Luna drowned his heartaches in drink and once made some nasty remarks about Nelly in the presence of Rizal, who asked Luna to apologize and retract what he said. Luna refused, so they set a time and date for a duel. If this historic duel pushed through, we would have lost one national hero, or a colorful general during the Philippine revolution or both and our history would not be the same. Antonio Luna's tragedy, it seems, was his temper.

Luna later apologized to Rizal when he was sober, stating he could never harm Rizal (but then drunk men do not lie or do they?). To show his good faith, he ordered

his friends to tie him to a chair, and gag him the next time he was drunk and talkative. Juan Luna likewise wrote Rizal to apologize for his brother's drunken behavior. That was the end of the story, and Antonio graciously bowed out of the picture.

In a letter from Madrid on April 1891, Luna told Rizal:

"With respect to Nelly, frankly I think there is nothing between us ... there is nothing more. I had been her fiancé. We wrote to each other. I liked her because I knew how worthy she was, but circumstances beyond our control made all that happiness evaporate. She is good, she is naturally endowed with qualities admirable in a young woman and I believe she will bring happiness not only to you but to any other man who is worthy of her ... I congratulate you as one congratulates a friend. Congratulations!"

Luna then buried his broken heart in his studies, "Now I am killing myself with Chemical Biology and other subjects for my doctorate."

Sour Grapes

IN 2014 Salcedo Auctions lived up to its "praise releases" by setting an auction record in the Rare Books department. A first edition of Rizal's *Noli Me Tángere*, published in Berlin in 1887, was put on the block with an estimate of PHP 300-350,000. It hammered at six million pesos. Adding the buyer's premium and VAT, the final price paid was PHP 7,000,008, the highest ever paid for a Philippine book to-date.

Contrary to a rumor circulating in collecting circles, I am, unfortunately, not the consignor of the *Noli*. As a matter of fact, I now regret having sold my copy of the rarer *El Filibusterismo*, published in Ghent in 1891, three decades ago for PHP 7,000. Had I held on to my mint condition, first edition *Fili* and created the proper media hype, maybe I could have sold it for about the same price as the record-breaking *Noli*. As they say in Filipino, *nasa huli ang pagsisisi* (regret comes in the end).

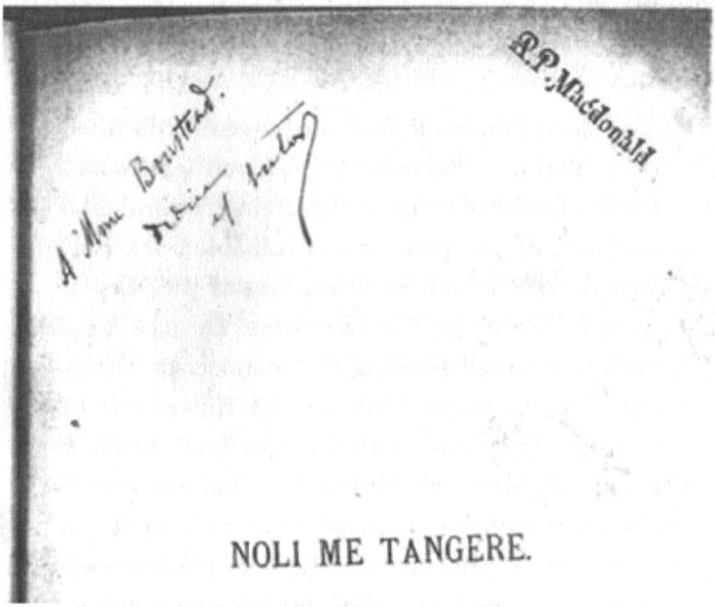
Consulted by parties interested in bidding for the *Noli* at the 2014 Salcedo auction, I said it shouldn't fetch more than PHP 500,000, or about USD 12,000 at the time. I based this conservative estimate on the last copy of a first edition *Noli* that was put up for auction

in 2004 as part of the 75th anniversary of the Philippine Numismatic and Antiquarian Society (PNAS). This copy personally inscribed by Rizal and presented to the mother of his girlfriend Nelly Boustead, was then offered with the reserve price of PHP 500,000 or USD 10,000 not a bad markup for something acquired dirt cheap from an online second-hand bookstore.

The PNAS catalogue entry reads:

> 1st edition Book "Noli me tangere." Published by Berlin BuchdruckereiActionGesellschaft SetzerinenSchule des LetteVereins, Berlin 1886 (sic) one of the greatest and valuable book (sic) written by Dr. José Rizal leading to the "Cry of Independence" (sic). At one time, Dr. José Rizal even considered burning the manuscript of this book which might have altered the course of history. The Spanish authorities banned the book for reason that it was heretic (sic) and subversive: anyone caught in possession of this book, is subject to imprisonment. The first edition book published in Berlin on 1886 (sic) became very rare. This particular first edition book to be auctioned by the PNAS has an intriguing question: Inside is a handwritten dedication addressed to Ms. Nelly Boustead, stating "adieu" and signed "el autor." Mystery surrounds why he would write "adieu"

which actually meant goodbye instead of the usual salutations? And why would he sign "el autor" instead of his usual signature? Some Rizalista historian has written of a love story between the two lovers. Extremely rare. USD 10,000.



A first edition *Noli Me Tángere* was acquired cheaply from an online second-hand bookstore, it was inscribed by Rizal to Nelly's mother, Mrs. Boustead. I regret not acquiring this when it was offered at auction. It is more valuable than the other unremarkable unsigned ones that sold for much more in later auctions.

Expecting a sober, better researched, and better written description from the Philippine Numismatic and Antiquarian Society, I was disappointed that most auction catalogues in the Philippines are a far cry from Sotheby's or Christie's that provide erudite bibliographic information rather than create intrigue and mystery to increase its desirability and raise its sale price. Some comments: first, the *Noli* was published in 1887, not 1886; second, the photograph of Rizal's inscription was misread by the catalogue writer. "*Dedico*"[I dedicate] was mistaken for "*Adieu*." "M. Boustead" that was thought to be Rizal's girlfriend Nelly, actually refers to her mother, Madame Boustead, that explains why the dedication required the more formal "*el autor*" instead of Rizal's iconic signature. Translated from the original Spanish, the inscription reads: "To Mrs. Boustead I dedicate [this book by] the author."

The owner of the inscribed copy of the *Noli* today should be happy that an unsigned, not-so mint condition *Noli* sold for PHP 7 million because it is worth much more. But then auctions are not a true measure of value or a barometer of the market because these operate, not on true market value, but on the desire two buyers willing to own something at any price. The value of an object remains with the buyer, who may or may not be able to resell for the same price paid.

Nevertheless, other encouraging results for bibliophiles unloading from their collections were: PHP

408,000 for a first edition copy of Rizal's annotated edition of Antonio de Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* (Paris, 1890) and PHP 250,000 or a quarter of a million, for the small pamphlet *Constitución Política de la República Filipina* better known as the Malolos Constitution, and published in Barasoain in 1899. The latter can still be found and bought for much less, the same for Rizal's edition of the Morga. However, there is an autographed copy of the Morga in a private collection in Makati for which I had long wanted to make an offer, but with the record prices now set I will not get it cheap.

I was a college student on an allowance when I started collecting Filipiniana in the 1980s. There were no crazy auctions then, and with perseverance one could build a decent library, as I did. My regret, in the glow of these auction prices, is that I gave up on rare books ten years ago because as a historian, I needed the content rather than the actual books. I did not need a first edition if a reprint or photocopy was available.

Today, I have a growing digital library that is more portable than a roomful of books. As I mature I have become more of a historian than a bibliophile who will not make millions for the books I own. I console myself with the thought that I am a sour but happy grape.

The Lady in the Portrait

IN December 2017 a portrait of a young lady by Félix Resurrección Hidalgo went on the block at León Gallery in Makati generating a Facebook controversy because the identity of the sitter was advertised as "Nellie (sic) Boustead, eighth of the nine girlfriends of Rizal." The painting eventually sold for over PHP 8 million and one cannot tell if that price, quite fair for an authentic work in a sea of fakes circulating in the art market, was due to the Rizal connection or not. Textbook history paints Rizal not just as a patriot, but as a serial womanizer that did not result in marriage, domesticity, and children. Depending on the teacher or the textbook used in school, the names of the eight women in Rizal's life are memorized for quizzes, reports, or classroom discussion. However, my research brings the total to 13. More if we include stray references or footnotes in the national hero's short and tragic life.

Nelly was the daughter of Eduardo Boustead, a rich Anglo-Filipino. Eduardo Boustead inherited the Manila branch of the trading firm set up by his father Edward Boustead in Singapore. Edward Boustead returned to England in 1851. In 1888 Eduardo travelled to England

on learning of his father's death, to get his share of the fortune only to discover that his father had another family in England who didn't even know he existed, thus his share of the inheritance was given to an infant grandson. More research will uncover the details of the Boustead fortune. For now, let's leave it at their being a rich family with residences in Paris and in the resort city of Biarritz. It is assumed that the English Bousteads paid their half-brother his share of the inheritance provided he left them in peace by leaving England.

To come up with a more definitive identification of the portrait on the auction block, we need to review the confused and confusing retelling of Rizal's love life because there are two Boustead sisters: Nelly or Helen that Rizal almost married, and the younger Adelina identified in some sources as another of the hero's love interest. I have yet to secure a copy of the December 1929 issue of *The Philippines Herald* to check if Nelly's letters reproduced there include photographs or transcriptions of the original French texts because these are not available. From these it is clear that: Rizal formally asked Eduardo Boustead for his daughter's hand in marriage; that Eduardo did not have a problem with Rizal; that Mrs. Boustead did not approve, or needed some convincing; that Nelly would accept if Rizal converted; that Rizal could not be Protestant so Nellie broke off the engagement.

To increase its value, León Gallery insists the lady in the portrait (right) is Nelly Boustead. Compared with photos of Adelina (top left) and Nelly (bottom left) taken in Paris in 1889 the time Felix Hidalgo painted the portrait. Compare the portrait with the two studio photographs of Nelly on page 89.

Where Rizal's letters and diaries are silent on the matter, the letters of his friends provide stray information. Valentín Ventura wrote:

"I congratulate you on having been jilted by your little lassie because it saves you various things: money, time, and ... providence."

Marcelo H. del Pilar scribbled this postscript on a letter of Mariano Ponce to Rizal and signed "Selong" his nickname:

In the continuation of the Noli, the O may be changed into E. [Neli] Be very careful not to let that happen or may it be so. Please greet mother and daughter for me, especially the E in Noli.

Tomás Aréjola, a friend from Bicol, provided unsolicited advice:

In your letter you talk repeatedly of Boustead who can be a madame [Mrs.] or a mademoiselle [Miss]. Several times here since last year I have been told about this young woman who, according to your letter, is also a Filipino. They told me that she is highly commendable for her very thorough education, her very beautiful moral and physical qualities, and, in addition, for being a Filipino. On this occasion and all the time you are there exposed to the warmth of the treatment and attentions of that family, may I take the liberty of making the following reflections ... I know that you are now free from your engagement in the Philippines. [Leonor Rivera, Rizal's fiancée, married an Englishman.] On the other hand, while conditions there are not altered, your permanence in our country is not advisable; and even if it were so, they would never leave you in peace at your home. Consequently by marrying there, I fear that instead of happiness,

you would only find bitterness and troubles. And what is the remedy? What is the proper solution in the face of such well-founded fears? See if Mlle. Boustead suits you, court here, and marry here, and we are here to applaud such a good act.

Last but not least is Antonio Luna, a rival of Rizal for Nelly's affections:

Compare these two studio photographs of Nelly with the portrait on page 87.

> With respect to Nelly, frankly, I think there is nothing between us more than one of those friendships enlivened by being fellow countrymen. It seems to me that there is nothing more. My word of honor, I had been her fiancé, we wrote to each other. I liked her because I knew how worthy she was, but circumstances beyond our control made all that happiness one cherished evaporate. She is good; she is naturally endowed with qualities admirable in a young woman and I believe that she will bring happiness not only to you, but to any other young man who is worthy of her. I have prolonged this letter, lad. I congratulate you as one congratulates a friend ...

All this may be irrelevant to Philippine history, but serves to remind us that our heroes were made of flesh and blood like you and me.

Did Rizal Love Josephine Enough to Retract?

THE love life of José Rizal reveals a human side to a hero so deified he is made to appear as stiff and boring as his statues that abound all over the Philippines. Josephine Bracken fires up the otherwise halfhearted interest in José Rizal. As Rizal's common-law-wife in Dapitan who later claimed to have married him shortly before his death is central to the controversy still raging since 1897.

To accept Rizal as having married Bracken is to accept his alleged retraction of religious error.

When Dolores Bracken Abad *viuda de* Mina died in Metro Manila in 1987 at 87-years-old. She was the adopted daughter of Vicente Abad, a Filipino representative of Tabacalera, Hong Kong, and Josephine Bracken who, before her marriage to Abad, was José Rizal's mistress.

The late Mrs. Mina, who was only two years old when Josephine Bracken died, knew of her mother from secondary sources. The only article about Mrs. Mina recently published in the papers describes Josephine Bracken as the wife of Rizal and confirms his retraction from "religious error."

My friend Malou Villaroman, great-great-grandaughter of Saturnina, eldest sister of José Rizal, holding the hardwood bas relief of Josephine Bracken's profile carved by Rizal during his Dapitan exile. I have only known this sculpture from prewar photographs, I am happy the original has been preserved by Felix and Aurora Ver Gonzalez grand niece of José Rizal.

Spying on Bracken

Aside from Mrs. Mina and the numerous (but not necessarily accurate) biographies of the national hero, the archives of the *Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores*, or the Spanish Foreign Ministry in Madrid, yields a few interesting documents on Josephine Bracken and the *junta filibustera* active in Hong Kong.

In a dispatch to the Minister of State in Madrid on February 17, 1897, the Spanish consul in Hong Kong, José de Navarro, reported on Masonic rites held for José Rizal and other *rebeldes fusilados* in that city. Navarro related that after the necrological services, Rizal's "*Mi Último Pensamiento*" (the poem now more popularly known as "*Mi Último Adiós*") was read, followed by, the distribution of printed copies of the poem together with photographs of Rizal.

Samples of these were enclosed in his dispatch to Madrid. He ended his report by saying that violent speeches followed the reading of the poem. The speeches all attacked Spain and her administration in the islands, with most of the anger directed at the religious orders.

In his dispatch of May 30, 1897, Navarro reported that:

> On Sunday morning, 23 May 1897, the English ship Yuensang arrived in Hong Kong. On board was the widow of Dr. Rizal travelling under the name Mrs. Josephine Bracken Taufer, surname of her adoptive father. She stayed in the house of José Ma. Basa where she is visited by all members of the junta filibustera. The widow used the press to attack Spain and the Spaniards and spoke about events in the Philippines ... She wished to excite public opinion ...

With Nonie Bantug, descendant of Narcisa Rizal; in my hand is a clay sculpture depicting Josephine Bracken sleeping (inset), made by Rizal during his Dapitan exile.

The dispatches of Navarro show how closely watched Basa, and later Aguinaldo and his men, would be in the Crown Colony. With Spanish spies tailing these "rebels" in Hong Kong, the governor-general in Manila and the government in Madrid were updated on the movements of the expatriate Filipino patriots. Navarro, in another dispatch to Madrid, stated that he did not need three more spies since "Bracken is in no position to help the rebels." He

requested permission to hire only two more people, one to help in the chancery and another to keep an eye on the Filipinos. Navarro had his hands full as he also had to gauge public opinion on Spanish rule in the Philippines. Many of his reports contain clippings from the Hong Kong papers, mostly negative reports on the situation in the Philippines. Ever the enemy of repressive regimes, the press was Navarro's biggest headache, since Josephine Bracken gave interviews to both American and European correspondents in Hong Kong.

Mrs. Rizal Interviewed in HK

An interesting clipping too long to be reproduced here is a lengthy interview Josephine Bracken gave to the reporter of *The China Mail*. In this interview, she talked about her meeting with Rizal and her marriage to him. She mentioned that after the execution of Rizal, "She set off on foot ... to the rebel position at Imus, without informing her sisters-in-law (the Rizals) of her plans. She walked all night and arrived at Sapote (sic) at eleven o'clock in the morning. There she met one of the civilian authorities who asked her who she was to which she made the reply, 'A sister, Rizal's widow.' On the news becoming known, she was well-received and from there she was taken to Imus, where she met Emilio Aguinaldo ... She was received with great demonstration as the widow of a martyr for a cause. They conducted her to San Francisco de Malabon (now Gen. Trias) and there

she remained in one of the convents. In that convent were many traces of the licentious life of the priests. Here she remained for twenty-three days caring for the sick and wounded ... When the fight of Marinas (Dasmariñas) took place, Mrs. Rizal in company with another lady went out on horseback armed with Mauser rifles. She states she was lucky enough to kill a Spanish officer ..."

Before we go out to set up a fan club, there are a few details in the interview which do not match documentary evidence. For example, in her account of the execution, the article stated, "Dr. Rizal was then conducted to the place of execution on the Luneta, his wife following behind. At the place of the execution she was not permitted to go near him. He behaved with great fortitude all the time, and took off his hat and bade everyone goodbye three times, stating he had forgiven all those who had done him evil. The firing party then shot him in the back and he expired immediately. His corpse was taken ... away to the cemetery, at the gates of which an armed guard refused admission to the sorrowing widow. They buried his body without a coffin and for four days afterwards soldiers guarded the grave. Mrs. Rizal was refused admittance several times to the cemetery, but she ultimately gained entrance by forcing her way in, telling the soldiers to fire upon her if they wished to detain her ..."

Josephine's whereabouts on the day of execution is unknown, and had she been in the Luneta she would have

stood out. Second, it was Rizal's sister who found Rizal's body in the Paco Cemetery, not Josephine. Rizal could not have taken off his hat because he was bound by the arms. These little discrepancies contained in a spurious handwritten "Autobiography" by Josephine taint her credibility. This is where the problem comes in. Josephine Bracken, from the first time she met Rizal, had not been very honest about her origins. Critical Rizal biographers like Austin Coates do not hide their reservations about Bracken, and it is in this light that one cannot objectively take all of the statements Josephine gave in her interviews as true or accurate.

Madly In Love

For a man used to the intellectual and cultural climate of Europe and the security and closeness of a warm family, the exile in Dapitan was lonely and boring, Rizal tried to keep busy by writing to scholars in Europe, sending specimens of insects and plants that now carry his name. But this was not enough. Josephine filled an emotional vacuum, an affair which the Rizal family was not happy about. Josephine was relief from boredom and there is no doubt that Rizal found distraction in her.

There were rumors that Josephine was a bar girl in Hong Kong. María Rizal was suspicious of Josephine from the start, simply because Josephine and her blind stepfather, George Taufer, arrived in Dapitan with a certain Manuela Orlac, mistress of someone in the Manila

Cathedral and a suspected Church spy. Despite all this, romance bloomed while Rizal was treating Taufer's eyes. Rizal, sensing his family's apprehensions, tried to bridge this gap between his relatives and "Miss B," as he called her. He appealed to his mother in a letter dated March 14, 1895:

My very dear Mother:

Bearer is Miss Josephine Leopoldine Taufer, with whom I was on the point of getting married, relying, of course, on your consent. Our relationship was broken as proposed by her, because there were many difficulties on the way. She is almost entirely an orphan. She has no relatives except very distant ones.

As I am interested in her and it is very easy for her to decide later whether to marry me, and as she is liable to be left entirely alone and abandoned, I am asking you to extend her hospitality there, treating her as a daughter until she has a better opportunity or occasion to come back ... Please treat Miss Josephine as a person whom I esteem and much appreciate, and whom I would not like to see exposed and abandoned.

Your affectionate son who loves you,
José Rizal

Shady Past

Austin Coates, author of *Rizal: Philippine Nationalist and Martyr*, asserts that Josephine's Hong Kong church records were tampered with. Contrary to her claims to being English, Josephine was the illegitimate daughter of an Irishman named Joseph Bracken and an unknown Chinese mother. Coates adds that the social stigma of being Eurasian in nineteenth century Hong Kong was worse than being illegitimate. Coates goes further to state that George Taufer and his wife could not have children because they were syphilitic!

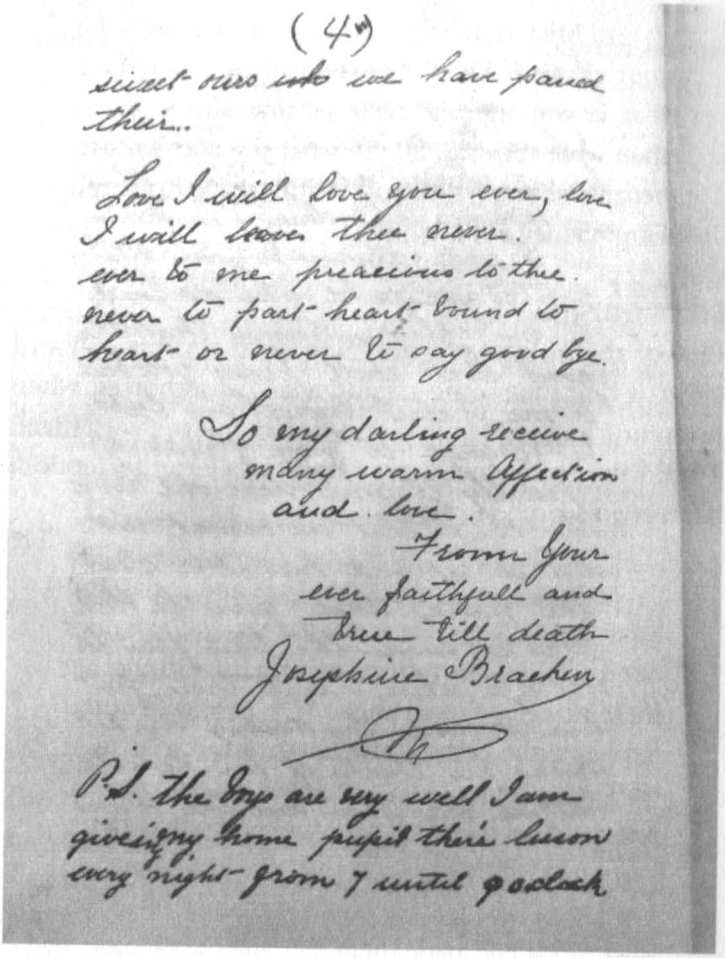
The Taufers stayed in Manila for some time before the trip to Dapitan. During this short period, Josephine's stepsister, Sarah, ran off and married a Filipino from the Sunico family. Coates hints at sexual abuse to explain why Josephine clung to Rizal in an effort to leave Taufer. In his letter to his mother, Rizal mentioned his broken relationship with Josephine due to "difficulties on the way." The blind Mr. Taufer, sensing his being abandoned due to the developing relationship between Rizal and Josephine, attempted to commit suicide one morning with a razor! Eventually overpowered by Rizal, the couple agreed that Josephine would take Taufer back to Hong Kong and return to the Philippines. The letter was a *carta de presentación* (letter of recommendation) to Teodora Alonso and the Rizals. Thus, Josephine was invited to stay in Binondo with Narcisa Rizal.

Live-In Lovers

When Josephine returned to Dapitan, she discovered that the parish priest refused to marry them unless Rizal retracted from religious error and returned to the Catholic Church. Since there was no civil marriage at the time, they decided to "live-in," which infuriated the priest even more. While Rizal and Josephine were not ashamed of their open relationship, Rizal knew it bothered his mother, so in successive letters to the family he would always mention "Miss B. who sends her regards." Furthermore, to make the Rizals accept his common-law wife, Rizal would often describe his happy comfortable domestic life. In a letter to Trinidad dated September 25, 1895, he related:

> ... Miss B. is thanking you for your remembrance and sends you hers. She cooks, washes, sews, takes care of the chickens and the house. In the absence of miki for making pancit, she made a kind of long macaroni noodles out of flour and eggs, which serves the purpose. If you could send me a little angkak I would be grateful to you, for she makes bagoong; she also makes chili miso but it seems to me that what we have will last us for ten years ...

To Trinidad again on November 21, 1895:


(4)

sweet vows which we have paid
their..

Love I will love you ever, love
I will love thee ever.
ever to me precious to thee.
never to part- heart- bound to
heart- or never to say good bye.

So my darling receive
my warm affection
and love.

From Your
ever faithfull and
true till death
Josephine Bracken

P.S. The boys are very well I am
giveing my home pupil this lesson
every night- from 7 until 9 oclock

One of the extant letters of Josephine to her "Dear Joe." Detail from a letter written in August 1896 when Rizal was detained on a ship on Manila Bay prior to his trip to Spain.

... Miss B. thanks you with all her heart for your gift; it is likely that she will go on the boat that is coming. She believes that she is better than what they say, and in what she does for me, because she obeys me and attends to me in a way a Filipina may not easily do.

Stillborn Son

One of the mysteries concerning Rizal was his stillborn child, a boy that some accounts say was aborted when Josephine had a fall following a violent quarrel with Rizal. The contrary is casually mentioned in a letter to Teodora Alonso on March 12, 1896:

... Here we received stockings and socks, and Miss B. gives you her many thanks and she does not know how to reciprocate you. She cannot go there now, for there is nobody to take care of the nephews; she bathes them, washes and sews their clothes, so much so that the poor girl cannot rest, but she does this with pleasure for she has much love for the little boys and they like her more than me. Once Osio got his hands dirty and filled her with ... She has made them new suits of cañamo. I am afraid she aborted for she was serious yesterday."

The loss of his son was a painful blow to the already

brooding Rizal. Earlier Rizal had tried to secure maternal approval of his "live-in" relationship when he wrote on January 15, 1896:

> My dear mother,
>
> I received your affectionate letter and I am very sorry for the disappointments you have had. We (José and Miss B.) lack nothing, except that we are not married, but as you yourself say: it is better to live in the grace of God than being married in mortal sin. Until now we have not quarreled and when I give her advice, she does not answer. If you come and accept her I expect that she will get along well with you. Besides she has nobody in the world except me. I am all her kinsfolk ...

Rizal's four-year exile in Dapitan ended with permission to leave for Cuba, to serve as a doctor in the Spanish army. Considered a dangerous filibuster, he was not allowed to disembark from the man-of-war, Castilla, which was docked in Manila Bay. While waiting for passage out of the Philippines, he received a sad letter from Josephine dated August 13, 1896. Giving in to obvious family pressure from the Rizals, she tried to break her relationship with her "dear Joe."

> ... Ah, my dear I am suffering a great deal with them in Trozo, it is quite true they ought to be ashamed of me as they say in my face and in the presence of Sra. Narcisa and their children because I am not married to you. So, if you hear that I don't go to Trozo anymore, don't be surprised, if you like me to send all your things aboard of the man of war I can do so. If you go to Spain you see any one of your fancy you better marry her, but dear hear me, better marry than to live like what we have been doing. I am not ashamed and think you had better get married to someone else. Your Sister Narcisa and your Father they are very good and kind to me.

The last line proves that not all the Rizals approved of her.

Rizal Family Denies Marriage

The Rizal family denied that Josephine ever married Rizal, thus casting doubt on the account of the Jesuit Vicente Balaguer who claimed to have officiated at both the wedding and the retraction. Balaguer says he married Josephine and Rizal before the execution in the early morning of 30 December 1896, in the presence of one of Rizal's sisters. Family lore maintains that none of them was in Fort Santiago or at the Luneta on that day. Neither was Josephine.

What adds to the mystery is that in her marriage to

Vicente Abad, Josephine didn't use the surname Rizal, which she would be entitled to use if she were legally married to him. The consular dispatches, despite their reference to "*la viuda de Rizal*," used her official name, Josephine Bracken. Why didn't she use the surname Rizal nor have a marriage certificate to prove it? Josephine could not prove the marriage during the litigation over Rizal's valuable library, which was entrusted to José Ma. Basa to be returned to the country at the right time. Josephine claimed but could not get her hands on the library as she could not prove her marriage to Rizal. Austin Coates says this is why Josephine's church and legal papers do not match. She is described as the widow of Rizal in her church papers and simply as Josephine Bracken in her legal papers. This is enough to cast doubt on the marriage.

After all is researched and done, this article leads only to a dead end, because Rizal definitely loved the woman he immortalized in one of his most beautiful poems in the Spanish language. The second to the last verse of the poem specifically alludes to Josephine when Rizal wrote, "*adiós dulce extranjera mi amiga mi alegría*" (farewell, sweet foreigner, my darling, my delight).

The rabid anti-retraction group asks why Rizal did not write "*mi esposa*" instead of "*mi amiga*" but that is a matter of rhyme. A better question would be, how do you explain the existence of Rizal's copy of *Imitación de Cristo* by Thomas à Kempis with the inscription, "To my

dear and unhappy wife Josephine December 30th 1896 José Rizal"? It seems Rizal himself is inconsistent and this is what keeps his memory alive. Rizal and Miss B. had lived in for sometime without formal marriage with no fear or shame, so why would Rizal retract on the day of his execution when it would have made no difference to his fate? The argument that he was "pressured" into doing so contradicts the military doctor's statement that Rizal's pulse checked before his execution was normal, hardly that of a frightened man! If he had married and retracted, why didn't he mention it to friends or relatives in his last letters? Rafael Palma, witness to the execution, said that Rizal turned his back on the crucifix offered by his Jesuit friends before he was shot. Again, not the action of a man who has returned to the folds of the Church.

The pros and cons of the retraction can be left for another article. Perhaps we should not take Rizal's dedication on the Kempis book literally, as they were, after all, practically man and wife without being married. Too bad this long article has to end with an unanswered question central to this story—did Rizal love Josephine enough to retract?

Unhappy Wife of José Rizal

DESPITE its unhappy ending, the story of José Rizal and Josephine Bracken is one of the best known in Philippine history. It remains so simply because their marriage has been the subject of debate simmering for over 120 years. Whether or not Rizal married his live-in partner shortly before his execution in Bagumbayan is a question inseparable from the issue of his retraction from religious error.

While historians argue, many visitors will flock to the National Museum to gaze at what is perhaps the most personal, the most sentimental of Rizal relics—a 19th century Spanish edition of the devotional classic *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis.

We do not know if the national hero read the book or not, whether he drew spiritual comfort from it during his last hours in his Fort Santiago prison cell. But what makes this ordinary book extraordinary is an inscription on the flyleaf that reads: "To my dear and unhappy wife Josephine December 30th 1896 José Rizal."

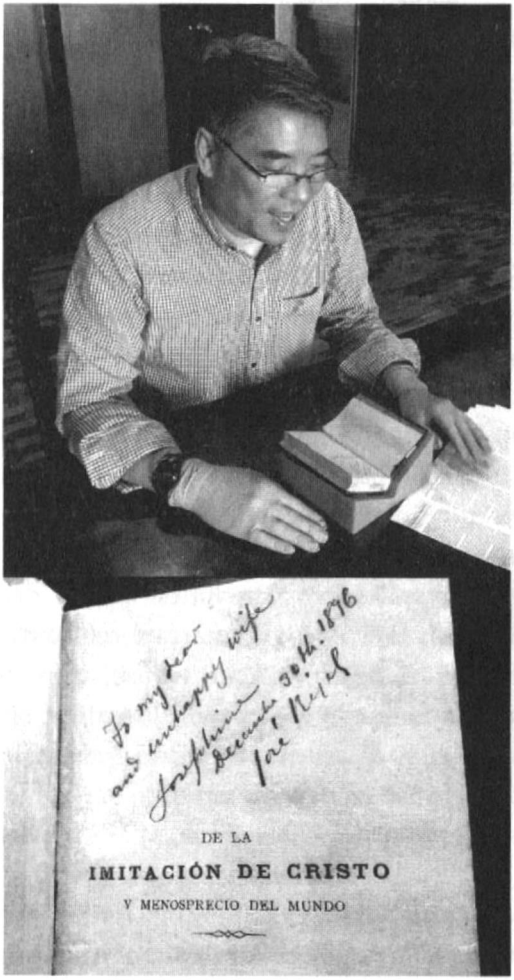
This small leatherbound book measures 14.5 by 8.5 centimeters, and carries the kilometric Spanish title: *De la Imitación de Cristo y Menosprecio del Mundo por*

el V. Tomás de Kempis. Traducción del Latín por P. Juan Eusebio Nieremberg de la Compañía de Jesús enriquecida con varias e interesantes adiciones por el Ilmo Sr. Dr. D. Antonio Estallela Obispo de Teruel. Con licenica del ordinario Cuarta edición Barcelona Imp. Y Librería de Subirana Hermanos Calle de la Puertaferrisa, Num 13. 1895 (On *The Imitation of Christ and Contempt for the World* by Thomas à Kempis. Translated from the original Latin by Fr. Juan Eusebio Nieremberg of the Society of Jesus and enriched by various and interesting additions by the Illustrious Antonio Estallela, Bishop of Teruel ... Fourth edition Barcelona Press and Subirana Brothers Bookstore ... 1895).

Coded message?

Aside from the inscription, there are faint markings on the table of contents at the end of the book, crosses and underlined text that await further research to determine if these are by Rizal or not, if these markings are yet another coded message or not.

Sometime in the mid-1980s, the book was offered to the government for purchase through the late Serafín D. Quiason, then chair and executive director of the National Historical Institute (NHI) by the heirs of a certain Silvino Dayco who acquired it from the husband of Bracken's adopted daughter, Dolores Abad de Mina, sometime before World War II.



Reunited with the Kempis Rizal inscribed to Josephine Bracken in the National Museum over three decades since I first handled it as part of the estate of the late Silvino Dayco.

Emilio Aguilar Cruz, senior member of the NHI board, confirmed its authenticity after a thorough examination, since it was supported by a letter from National Library Director Teodoro M. Kalaw thanking Dayco for lending the book for an exhibition in the Library before the war. Unfortunately, government funds were not available to purchase the book at the time so it went missing for almost three decades until it resurfaced a few weeks ago when its present owner, Patrick Eugenio, donated it to the National Museum, on condition that it be permanently displayed for the enjoyment and education of the public.

Aside from the Kempis in the National Museum, the other physical clue to the Rizal-Bracken marriage is a handwritten autobiography preserved in the López Museum where Bracken concludes with a declaration that "Before his execution, he married me at 5 o'clock in the morning." In this document, whose authenticity has been questioned, she signed herself "Josephine Bracken de Rizal, a widow." To dispute these, letters by Rizal have been presented to prove he never referred to her as his wife but rather as Josephine, Miss Josephine, Miss J, or Miss B.

"*Dulce extranjera*"

In the manuscript of Rizal's valedictory poem, "*Último Adiós*," kept in the vault of the National Library, Josephine is immortalized in the second to the last verse, which reads: "*Adiós dulce extranjera, mi amiga, mi alegría*

(Farewell sweet foreigner, my darling, my delight)."

But the poem was written out in its final form and hidden in a small metal cooking stove on December 29, 1896, and the marriage occurred in the early morning of December 30.

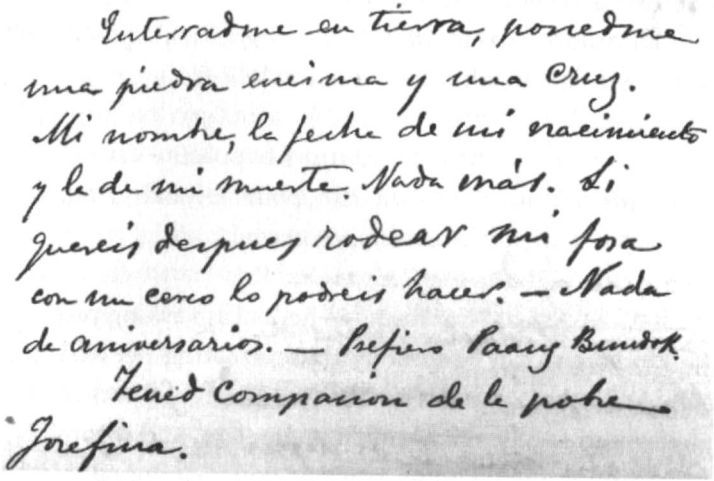
While historians argue, Rizal left us with no doubt regarding his affection for Bracken.

In a letter dated March 14, 1895, Rizal introduced Bracken to his mother in Manila as follows:

> Bearer is Miss Josephine Leopoldine Taufer, with whom I was on the point of marrying, relying, of course, on your consent.
>
> ... As I am interested in her ... I am asking you to extend her hospitality there, treating her as a daughter ... Please treat Miss Josephine as a person whom I esteem and much appreciate, and whom I would not like to see exposed and abandoned.
>
> Your affectionate son who loves you,
>
> José Rizal

In one of the last letters to his family, Rizal left specific instructions on where and how he wanted to be buried. He closed this letter with an appeal: "*Tened compasión de la pobre Josefina* (Have pity on poor Josephine)."

Two hours before he calmly walked to Bagumbayan for his appointment with destiny, Rizal left a small souvenir, a book dedicated to his "dear and unhappy wife Josephine."


Enterradme en tierra, poned me una piedra encima y una Cruz. Mi nombre, la fecha de mi nacimiento y la de mi muerte. Nada más. Si quereis despues rodear mi fosa con un cerco lo podeis hacer. — Nada de aniversarios. — Prefiero Paang Bundok. Tened Compasion de la pobre Josefina.

In his cell in Fort Santiago, Rizal addressed his final instructions to his family. He indicated his preferences on the site of his grave, text on his tombstone, etc. He ended with an appeal "Have pity on poor Josephine."

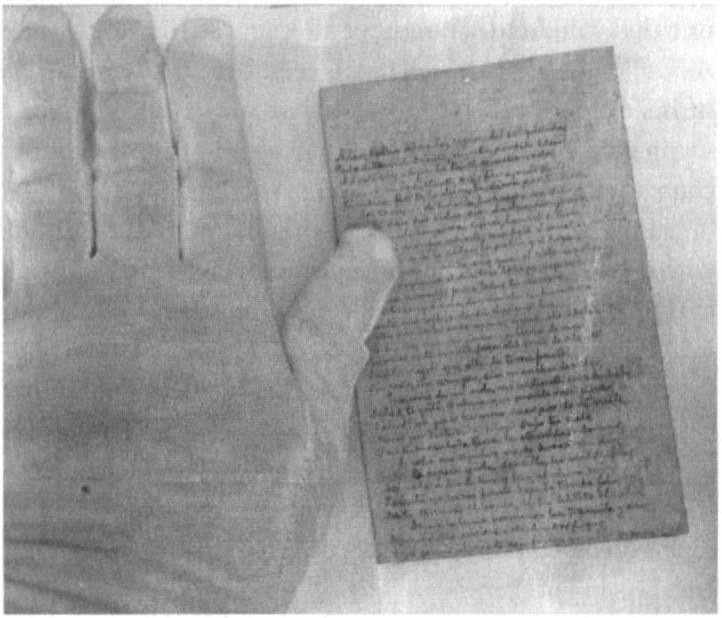
Haggling over the "*Último Adiós*"

TRADITION has it that José Rizal wrote his undated and untitled valedictory poem we all know as the "*Mi Último Adiós*" (My Last Farewell) on December 29, 1896, the eve of his execution. Sorry to be unromantic, but if I face a firing squad in the morning I will write out a will, rather than a long poem!

Physical description of the original manuscript starts with its measurement 9.5 x 15 centimeters, with faded writing in Rizal's neat hand on both sides. No erasures, mistakes, or hesitation. Before it was cleaned and transferred to an acid-free folder, it used to be preserved under glass in a leather case, protected inside a strong narra box. The manuscript appears to have been folded into four parts and was hidden inside a small alcohol stove or burner, a gift from Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera, that Rizal used in travels abroad till his last days in Fort Santiago.

This burner was bequeathed to his spinster sister Trinidad with the words: "There is something inside." The Rizal sisters, according to family tradition, gingerly fished the manuscript from hiding with their hairpins. Then the sisters made handwritten copies, which were distributed and later printed and disseminated in Hong

Kong in early 1897 by Mariano Ponce, who gave the untitled poem the title "*Mi Último Pensamiento*" (My Last Thought). These contemporary copies have since turned up at auction houses, generating confusion over which is the authentic one by Rizal.



My gloved hand beside the original manuscript of "*Último Adiós*" to provide a sense of scale. Original is preserved in the vault of the National Library of the Philippines.

When Josephine Bracken left the Philippines in 1897, she took [stole?] the "*Último Adiós*," insisting it was

bequeathed to her and not to Rizal's family. We can now be sure of this, not only through humorless reminiscences of Rizal's kin but from a file concerning the acquisition of the "*Último Adiós*" by the Philippine government in 1908 preserved in the Library of Congress.

On July 5, 1907, Edwin Wildman, author and brother of the US Consul to Hong Kong at the end of the 19th century, wrote the Bureau of Insular Affairs (BIA) in Washington offering the manuscript for sale to the Philippine Museum for USD 500. In November of that year, Wildman received a reply that the governor-general of the Philippines was requesting that the manuscript be sent to Manila for authentication, by comparing it with Rizal manuscripts in the archives.

In December 1907, Wildman sent the manuscript by registered mail from his home in New York to BIA in Washington, which forwarded it to Manila. He reiterated the USD 500 price, saying: "I only regret that I am not in position so that I can present this souvenir to the Philippine Museum, an act that would give me much pleasure." He also provided the following note on its provenance:

> ORIGINAL MSS OF DR JOSE RIZAL'S POEM
> "MY LAST THOUGHTS TO MY COUNTRY."
>
> The night before the execution of Dr. Rizal he sent for Josephine Brackin. "I came to the Palace

and was conducted to an altar where I found him waiting." He said: "Ah, dear, my time has come to be united to you, but separated forever." He begged me to forgive him the sorrow he had caused me, and told me that in the little cooking machine he had hidden a paper for me—the last message to his country.—extract from Josephine Rizal's own story from "Aguinaldo: A Narrative of Filipino Ambitions," by Edwin Wildman.

The original manuscript poem of the "last message" above referred to was given to the present owner in 1898 (for a consideration) in Manila.

Months passed and Wildman was agitated, until he received a letter dated August 31, 1908, that stated:

> We have just received a cable from Manila about the manuscript of the Rizal poem in which the Governor General advises us that the Philippine government desires to purchase the manuscript, but that they are of the opinion that the price asked is too high, and want to know whether you will accept five hundred pesos, or two hundred and fifty dollars. What may we say to the Governor General about the price?

The offer was repeated again in October, prompting Wildman to write:

> While I would like to oblige the government in the matter, I offered the poem at one-half of its value as estimated by collectors here, as I wanted to give the Philippines the first opportunity to possess it. If the Government do not want it at the price offered will you be so kind as to cable them to return it by first steamer and greatly oblige.

Manila blinked, Wildman was paid USD 500, and the "*Último Adiós*" has remained in the National Library of the Philippines ever since.

Row Over José Rizal's Will

IN 1902 Paciano Rizal Mercado, retired general of the Philippine Revolution and elder brother of José Rizal, broke a 15-year silence and wrote a letter to Professor Ferdinand Blumentritt. Josephine Bracken Abad had sued Teodora Alonso in an effort to force them to produce José Rizal's last will and testament. Paciano told Blumentritt not to mind Josephine, because the Rizals knew of no such will.

Josephine had written a series of letters to Blumentritt asking him to support her, claiming that as Rizal's widow she had a rightful share to an inheritance that included PHP 1,000 in cash; Rizal's extensive library worth about PHP 3,000; and paintings by Juan Luna which, then as now, were already prized canvases. She claimed the Rizal family cheated her of her inheritance by withholding "her husband's" will.

These letters, preserved in the National Libray, include this one from Josephine to Blumentritt dated November 29, 1897 that reads:

> Respectable Friend: I let you know by these few lines that my late husband Dr. J. Rizal left

all his books to you. There are three bookcases, I mean library (sic) in care of Mr. Jose Maria Basa's house I opened the will last month and found that the bookcases were for you, he very often told me that those books cost him USD 3000. I asked Mr. Basa for the books and he denied them, I think it is better for you to write over and ask him for the things that my husband left for you.

Yes; dear friend the Philippines [(sic) she meant Filipinos] out here now they are not Gentlemen, they deceived me a great deal their (sic) were USD 1000 given to Rizal by the Freemason Lodge so it was to be given to me, but they took it and spent it all. I think it is the best thing for you to give me a letter to hand the book cases to me and I will sent (sic) it over to you, because Mr. Basa is selling all the best books. I have lots of troubles with the Philippines [Filipinos] they are not what I thought them to be, I took them to be like my husband, but I see that I am deceived.

Hoping that all your famailly (sic) are enjoying good health and please excuse my letter if it is badly written because I am with a strong feavour (sic).

Faithful transcription of the letter not only shows her atrocious English, but also the fact that she wants

Studio photograph of Josephine Bracken in Filipiniana attire.

Blumentritt to give her a letter so Basa will turn the library over to her. Then she will send the books to Blumentritt. Actually, she or her accomplices would have sold every book as soon she got hold of them.

Rizal's British biographer, Austin Coates, the former Hong Kong Colonial Secretary, did some research and found a discrepancy in Josephine's marriage records in the Hong Kong Cathedral. Josephine had married Vicente Abad and thus had two sets of records in Hong Kong: the legal and ecclesiastical. Her legal papers describe her as "Josephine Brackin daughter of James Brackin," while the church document says "Josephine Brackin Widow Rizal daughter of James Brackin." Coates is disturbed not so much by the misspelled family name but by the fact that if she were married to Rizal and her marriage to Abad was her second, the records would reflect this. But they don't.

Basa's reply to Josephine's lawyers when they demanded that he turn over Rizal's library to her was that all he needed was proof of her marriage. According to Coates, this would have been easy to obtain through the British Consul in Manila if Josephine had indeed been married to Rizal. No such application was made to the British Consulate in Manila, so the conclusion is, there was no marriage at all.

Nothing came out of this embarrassing litigation, and Josephine died, forgotten in Hong Kong, buried in a pauper's grave. Coates has an unpublished monograph on

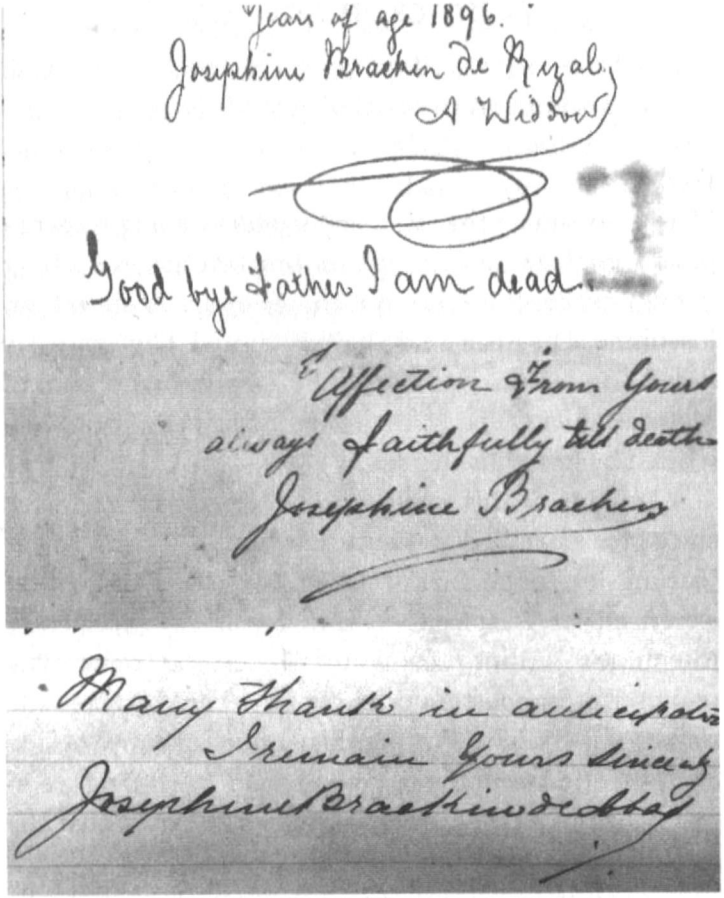
Josephine Bracken which he says will never be published, because her story is so sad and pathetic, but in 1990 Coates wrote out "Notes Relative to Josephine Bracken" and gave it to me as leads for further research. So far I am left with more questions than answers: Did Rizal die intestate? Did Rizal really marry Josephine? What if Josephine was telling the truth and there, indeed, was a will? What will that make of the Rizals who claimed there was none?

A Bracken Forgery

IT is unfortunate that so many students doing research papers on Rizal and Josephine Bracken get everything wrong because we do not have much material on Josephine. The little we do have is tainted. One source is based on a manuscript displayed in a private museum in Metro Manila called "Description of My Life," allegedly written by Josephine herself.

Looking at this manuscript, I felt something fishy, since I have handled authentic letters of Josephine to her "darling Joe" or to Rizal's sisters. I am no handwriting expert nor do I aspire to be one, but in my experience, Josephine's writing seems to tilt to the right. The manuscript in question does not have the characteristic slant but is straight. Putting this "autobiography" beside an authentic Josephine letter will show the difference in penmanship, proving beyond reasonable doubt that the so-called autobiography is a forgery.

In this spurious "autobiography," Josephine misspells the words until (untill), family (famailly), detachment (detchment), provinces (provinses), which you may think unusual for an Irish girl born and bred in Hong Kong. Well, in Josephine's authentic letters she makes



Compare the handwriting in the "Description of My Life" (top) allegedly written by Josephine Bracken with samples from two of her authentic letters (middle and bottom). Could the "Description" be in another hand because Josephine dictated it to someone rather than writing it herself? It does not contain her usual misspellings.

twice as many mistakes! Even in Josephine's misspellings and grammatical errors, the forger is wrong.

Let's take some of the important details to clear what has become established as "fact" in many Rizal biographies:

> My mother is a Native of Ireland and was married to my father on the 3rd of May 1868 In Belfast Ireland My Father' name is James Bracken and my Mother' Maiden name was Elizabeth Jane Macbride. We were five brothers and sisters. Charles Agnes Nelly Francis & myself Josephine ... and I was born in Hongkong at the Victoria Barracks on the 9th of August 1876.

Josephine's baptismal certificate found in the Hong Kong Catholic Cathedral by Rizal's biographer, Austin Coates, lists the father as "unknown." Josephine was entered in the records as "illegitimate" and "Anglo-Chinese." Coates believes Josephine's mother was probably a Chinese washerwoman. In the records, "illegitimate" was crossed out and changed to "legitimate," which is strange. Thus if you ask for a copy of Josephine's baptismal certificate without asking to see the original document, you will get the "corrected" version. Is this part of a cover-up to sanitize some shady parts of Rizal's life? We continue:

My father is a Corporal and Detchment Schoolmaster of a Detchment of Pembroke Camp. My Mother died in the 2nd of Septemebr 1876 after giving birth to me. After the loss of my beloved Mother I was then removed to the care of a neighbor untill after her burial. As my father is a Military he could not attend to all of us especially me for being so very small he gave me to a famailly to be adopted. The kind benevolent Couple Mr. and Mrs. Taufer took very good care of me until I was seven years old. Unfortunately at that age was when my adopted Mother died. This is When I was Seven years of age 1882.

"My father is a soldier" or "my father is a militaryman" is correct English, but "my father is a Military" sounds like a translation of "*Mi padre es un militar,*" which means the forger's mother tongue was Spanish, not English.

In 1893 Mr. Taufer got very ill and had sore eyes, as he tried several Doctor but none could do him any good. This was when I was eighteen years of age. On the 5th of September we went to Manila for the purpose of seeing Dr. J. Rizal unfortunately Dr. Rizal was not in Manila but up the Provinses. We stayed in Manila for six Months and then we went up to Dr. Rizal place. We arrived in Dapitan that

is the name of the province on the 14th of March 1894 in the morning at 7 o'clock. We stayed their a week before Dr. Rizal opperated on his eyes. After a weeks time Mr. Taufer could see a little. On the 22nd January Dr. Rizal asked Mr. Taufer if he had any objection if he mary me. But Mr. Taufer objected it, but as I had affection towards Mr. Rizal I entended to marry him. I accompanied Mr. Taufer back to Manila and returned to Dapitan in the next steamer. By that time Dr. Rizal prepared everything for our marriage, when everything was prepared I heard from a Spanaird that when we are married they would seperate me from my husband. I thought it over and told Dr. Rizal that it is better for us to waite until! he gets his freedom any how I stayed with him for one year, and we lived very very happy. Thank God I had a very peceful life as if I were a child on its Mother knee. I cannot complain of his care. Ha; yes but it did not last very long My happiness lasted only 20 month then my sorrows commenced again. This is when I was nineteen years of age 1895.

On the 20th of July 1896 Dr. Rizal left Dapitan for Cuba as a Doctor in the army but unfortunately they brought him back again and shot him on the 30th December 1896 before his execution he married me at 5 o'clock in the morning. This is when I am twenty years of age 1896.

Josephine Bracken de Rizal A Widow
Good bye Father I am dead.

Rizal and Josephine's marriage is debated by those who say they did against those who say otherwise. Josephine never signed herself "de Rizal," not even when the Hong Kong newspapers hailed her as the "Widow of Rizal." The manuscript suggests it was written shortly before she died because she bids goodbye to a certain "father." Could this be Taufer or the priest giving her the sacraments? On the first page of the manuscript is the date "22nd February 1897 Monday," that does not jibe with her date of death March 14, 1902 in her Hong Kong death certificate. Perhaps she dictated this to someone? But wasn't she afflicted with throat disease before she died of "ulceration of the breast/milliary tuberculosis" as stated in her death certificate? Josephine Bracken's story is a puzzle that needs solving.

Josephine Bracken: Woman with a Past

WHILE most people are forgotten as soon as they are put six feet under, Josephine Bracken remains controversial well over a century after her death from "milliary tuberculosis and ulceration of the breast." The hefty, well researched *Romance and Revolution: A Look Into the Lives and Times of José Rizal and Josephine Bracken* by Luís Lisa and Javier de Pedro (2010) presents an analysis of primary sources that clear up lingering debates on whether or not Rizal and Josephine were married in Fort Santiago before he walked to his execution. Whatever your position on the matter, this book is a good start for further study.

I wish to share from my notes, this sour interview given by Josephine's stepfather to the *China Mail* published on January 22, 1897, that has surprisingly not been cited anywhere before:

> The widow of Dr. Rizal is a woman with a past. The story of the life of the young woman who is stated to have had such a dramatic marriage with the late Dr. Rizal, on the eve of his being shot

for complicity in the Philippine Rebellion, loses much of the glamour and romance with which recent events seem to have coloured it, when related by Mr. [George] Taufer, who adopted her as his daughter at a very early age. Mr. Taufer, who resides at No. 8 Western Street, West Point, has had a most varied life. After taking part in the Civil War in America, he sailed from San Francisco to China. He was an engineer by profession, and for a number of years served on some of the coast and river steamers, afterwards enlisting in the Hong Kong Police Force, in which he did service for four years, retiring with the rank of sergeant. He was then appointed chief of the fire brigade of the Hong Kong Fire Insurance Company, retiring from this position in 1894 on account of failing eyesight. Mr. Taufer is now almost stone blind, but fortunately he is otherwise in very comfortable circumstances enjoying the fruits of what he assured us was hard-earned means.

The girl who was been brought so prominently before the public recently is not as has been stated of mixed parentage, but is of purely Irish extraction. She is in fact a daughter of the regiment, her father having served with the 28th Regiment in Hong Kong. She was born on the 9 August, 1876, and is therefore slightly

over 20 years of age. The girl by some unfortunate circumstances having been left unprovided for, Mr. Taufer adopted her as his daughter, and gave her a good education.

George Taufer gave a very sour interview on his stepdaughter Josephine to the *China Mail* published on January 22, 1897 that is not cited in the literature because it goes against what people want to believe of her as an *Amazona* who even killed a Spanish officer.

During the two years Mr. Taufer has suffered from cataract he had consulted numerous medical men, in order that he might have his sight restored, but without avail. Finally, he was advised to take a trip to the Philippines, and it was whilst on this journey that he first made the acquaintance of the late Dr. Rizal. In the latter part of September 1894, he departed to the Philippines, leaving Josephine to follow by a later steamer. He stayed in Manila during the months of October, November, December [1894] and January [1895], where he was joined by Josephine, who, he states, had during his absence from Hong Kong made pretty free with his money, and had behaved in a manner hardly reciprocal of the attention which Mr. Taufer had bestowed upon her. She spent a large sum of money which had been entrusted to her keeping in a lavish purchase of jewelry and in other extravagances. When she arrived in Manila she presented herself to her adopted father dressed in all this finery, and on Mr. Taufer being informed by the woman who acted as his nurse of Josephine's extravagance he could not refrain from reprimanding her. This matter having been eventually settled, Mr. Taufer and his adopted daughter went down to Perin [?] on the Island of Dapitan.

There is no built house in this place, only a number of mat sheds, but there is a Roman Catholic stone church. Here it was that Dr. Rizal made their acquaintance, being called in to operate on Mr. Taufer's eyes.

Mr. Taufer states that he was greatly enraged at the treatment he received at the hands of the doctor. Dr. Rizal cut one of his eyes, and stated he would complete the operation, but he had never done anything more, and the eye operated upon is now sightless, while the other eye is sensitive of a shadow passing over it. Mr. Taufer was so enraged at the doctor's treatment that he vehemently relates of his endeavor to attack Rizal with a razor but was only prevented by the strenuous efforts of five soldiers.

Mr. Taufer stayed there only about a month and his adopted daughter frequently requested to be allowed to marry Dr. Rizal, which request he indignantly refused. Josephine used many threats in order to gain his consent to the union, some of which were of a particularly degrading character. Afterwards she stated that she was married to Dr. Rizal, and Mr. Taufer believes this to be the case, and the mock marriage that was carried out previous to the execution was performed under the compulsion of the priests.

> Altogether this woman, who it is stated has gone to the rebel stronghold at Imus, can hardly be regarded, considering her former character as related by one so closely connected with her, as anything approaching the illustrious prototype with whom her name has recently been associated. Mr. Taufer returned to Hong Kong in January 1896[?].

Taufer's account goes against Josephine's embellished story given to and swallowed by the same newspaper later.

Josephine Bracken, Widow of Rizal

HONG Kong newspapers from the late 1890s contain dispatches from Manila that document the progress of the Philippine Revolution against Spain and the Filipino-American War, too. Josephine Bracken comes out twice in the *China Mail* of 1897. Following news that the "Widow of Rizal," as she was called, returned to Hong Kong in May 1897, two images of her came out in the same newspaper: One image, often quoted in books, portrays her as a modern Joan of Arc who fought in the Philippine Revolution and even killed a Spanish officer; the other image emerges from a surly interview given by her stepfather George Taufer who portrayed her as a scheming dishonest woman.

The more positive interview transcribed from the China Mail of May 29, 1897 reads:

> Mrs. Josephine Taufer, widow of Dr. Rizal who was shot in Manila for complicity in the Rebellion in the Philippines arrived in the Colony on May 23 by the Yuensang. A representative of the China Mail visited Mrs. Rizal at her place of residence today, and elicited a remarkable story of her career in the Philippines.

As is now very well known, Mrs. Rizal is an English girl, born in Hong Kong. In August 1894, she sailed for Manila, where Mr. Taufer had gone on medical advice, he having suffered for two years from cataract. After staying for six months in Manila, they journeyed to Perin on the island of Dapitan. Here Dr. Rizal was called upon to undertake the treatment of Mr. Taufer's eyes. Dr. Rizal had frequent opportunities of meeting Miss Taufer, and the friendship thus formed deepened into love and ultimately they were engaged. Dr. Rizal was at this time living in banishment. Everything was prepared for the marriage but one day a Spaniard came and told the young couple that if they were to be married he would separate them immediately afterwards. Miss Taufer expressed her surprise at what she termed his silly proposal, and said: "If I am not married I remain under the English Flag, and if I am married I will be under the Spanish flag."

Various circumstances prevented the union. At Dapitan Dr. Rizal was visited by Pau Balensuele [Pio Valenzuela—succeeding references will carry the correct spelling] who brought three blind men with him under the pretension that their eyes might be treated by the doctor. This was the man who brought the paper of the Katupunin [Katipunan] of Secret Society to Dr. Rizal, but

he endeavored to persuade Pio Valenzuela from taking part in the rising and characterized the proposal to institute the rebellion as foolish, as the men had not arms nor ammunition. He sent Pio Valenzuela away next day without giving him any indication of support.

Dr. Rizal Liberated

"On 28th July 1896 Dr. Rizal's liberty was sent from Manila, on condition that he should go to Cuba for medical service. They immediately left Dapitan by the Spanish mail España for Manila, leaving everything behind. On arrival in Manila harbour, a steam launch came alongside the steamer and a Spanish officer came aboard, and gave instructions that Dr. Rizal would be detained on board. Miss Taufer was allowed to go ashore half an hour afterward, and went to Dr. Rizal's home in Manila. About ten o'clock at night a message was sent on shore from Dr. Rizal that his sweetheart might come on board. She immediately obeyed the summons, and when she met the doctor he told her he had sent for her to say goodbye, that he was going on board the Spanish Cruiser [illegible] which was to convey him to Spain. The Castilla remained for about a month in Manila harbour, during which time Dr. Rizal was closely watched by order of [illegible] Henrique [illegible] mtalo. Miss Taufer [illegible] and Rizal's sister visited him [illegible] board

the vessel. [illegible] the preparation of that period that cruiser sailed for Spain. From Singapore he wrote to Miss Taufer, and that was the last letter she received from him during his absence in Europe, although he stated when he returned to Manila that he had written from Barcelona. On arrival at Barcelona he was detained by the authorities who searched his baggage, where they found his masonry papers, which were tucked away with his pen-knives, razors [illegible]. The Authorities declared [illegible] chief of the Katipunan."

While researching in the archives of the Spanish Foreign Ministry in Madrid in the 1980s I came across the dispatches of José de Navarro, Spanish consul in Hong Kong, that contained reports on expatriate Filipinos considered anti-Spanish and sympathetic to the revolution in the Philippines. The dispatches from 1897-1898 were particularly engaging because they contained raw intelligence information gathered by the consul and his spies who monitored the homes of prominent Filipinos described as the "Junta Filibustera."

Josephine Bracken was the subject of a number of dispatches beginning with her arrival in Hong Kong in May 1897, her stay in the home of José Ma. Basa, and the press interviews she gave, which attacked Spain and provided her version of conditions in the Philippines.

Two copies of Navarro's clippings from the *China Mail* regarding "the Widow of Rizal" exist—one sent to the

A previously unpublished photograph of a rather plump Josephine Bracken that I came across while researching in the U.S. Library of Congress in 2019.

governor-general in Manila, the other to Madrid. These yellowing and brittle clippings were damaged along the folds, so when I first transcribed them, I referred to the missing texts as "illegible." Since we are all familiar with the romantic angle of Josephine's life with Rizal, I conclude with material after Rizal's death, when Josephine slowly began to fade from history. Before she returned to Hong Kong in May 1897, Josephine was with the rebels in Cavite, having travelled there on the afternoon of December 30, 1896, the day Rizal was executed in Luneta:

OFF TO THE REBELS

The same day she set off on foot at half past three to the rebel position at Imus, without informing her sisters-in-law of her plans. She walked all night and part of next day and arrived at Sapote [Zapote] at eleven o'clock in the morning. There she met one of the civilian authorities who asked her who she was, to which she made the reply, "A Sister, Rizal's widow." On the news becoming known, she was well received, and from there was taken to Imus, where she met Emilio Aguinaldo, the rebel leader. She was received with great demonstration as the widow of a martyr for the cause. They conducted her to San Francisco de Malabon [now General Trias], and there she remained in one of the convents. In that convent

were many traces of the licentious life of the priests. Here she remained for twenty-three days caring for the sick and wounded.

IN THE FIGHT

When the fight of Mariñas [Dasmariñas] took place, Mrs. Rizal in company with another lady went out on horseback armed with Mauser rifles. She states she was lucky enough to kill a Spanish officer. There were only three or four of the rebels killed, shot in the head, and about two dozen wounded. After the encounter she returned to San Francisco de Malabon. At Silan[g] she states the Spaniards behaved with shocking barbarity, killing numbers of old men, women and children. Children of seven or eight months old were seized by the legs and their brains dashed out against the walls. She maintains that Imus was taken by treachery. Negotiations were being carried out by the authorities in Manila asking the rebels to come to terms, and whilst these were in progress the attack was commenced. When Imus was taken, Mrs. Rizal was lying ill at Tangas [Tanza?] about half-an-hour's walk from the convent, and that night at eleven o'clock they had to leave there for I[n]dang and passed through twenty-three villages to the Province of Baie.

Bracken then relates a meeting with the Spanish governor-general who, on the insistent request of the friars, asked her to return to Hong Kong to which she replied: "What is the use of the Governor-General if the priests govern the place?" Then there is a scene with the stomping feet, related thus:

> The Governor-General requested her to leave Manila and in the event of her doing so he would pay her passage and all that she wanted. He stamped his foot and said it was very ridiculous that a woman should engage in war, that the English were wrong in allowing her to do so. The English of course liked war instead of peace. She replied by stamping her foot and stating she did not care; she was not afraid of him. She did not respect him as Governor-General. When she bade him goodbye he was on very friendly terms with her. She told him if he was offended with her he could take her out and shoot her as her husband had been shot. She said "My husband died innocent, and his family is willing to die as he has done." If it was too much trouble for him to take her out to the public place of execution he could shoot her where she stood. During her stay in Manila she was carefully watched by detectives, and in consequence of information she received

> from a servant of one of the authorities that they were to tie her up and subject her to cruelties which she states would be a scandal and a disgrace for her as an English woman to suffer, she bought a quantity of strychnine which she constantly carried about with her, resolved that she would die by her own hand rather than submit to their cruelties.

This is the long *China Mail* feature on Bracken ends with her saying: "[A]s long as she had breath it would be her endeavor to help the Philippines in their fight for liberty." To clear my doubts on parts of Bracken's story requires more research that will hopefully result in another book.

"Mrs. Rizal" in the *New York Times*

HISTORICAL research sometimes yields some fake news. With regard to Josephine Bracken there is a lot of inaccuracies online because of sources like this front-page item from the September 27, 1897 issue of the *New York Times*. Rizal's "widow" is reported to be in Philadelphia seeking aid for the Philippine Revolution! I think the article is baloney and the so-called widow of Rizal an impostor out to make a fast buck. Read on:

> Marina Comenol Orbi Hozae Rizal, the widow of Dr. Hozae Rizal, who was butchered by General Polavieja on Dec. 6, 1896, is now in Philadelphia. Dr. Rizal was the acknowledged leader and instigator of the revolution in the Philippines, which has been smoldering since 1894. As the president of Manila University, he was honored and revered by the residents of the island. Religious persuasion and the atrocious list of tyrannies that are familiar to Cuban and Philippine historians finally were too grave for Dr. Rizal to bear. He was instrumental in gathering together the patriots and took to the field.

"All the News That's Fit to Print."

The New York Times.

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THE NEWS CONDENSED.

Stock market under pressure.

Cash wheat, No. 2, red, 67½; cash corn, 33½; cash cotton, 6 13-16.

FOREIGN.—Emperor William of Germany left Budapest after receiving in the name of Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria a bracelet, and making the decorations in the city. The Czar and Czarina entertained the Prince of Wales and other distinguished guests. Great Britain and the Mahdi. Stock parties pandemic. The Agricultural Bureau: Forage worse outlook in Midland counties. Rumors of the anti-cholera vaccine. The Indian Ocean cable. Sporting events. The Queen Regent of Holland opened the Diet, and opposed the Home Rule bill. Cholera in Russia. Cholera in Italy. Cholera in Austria. Cholera in Germany. The Queen Regent of Holland opened the Diet, and opposed the Home Rule bill. Cholera in Russia. Cholera in Italy. Cholera in Austria. Cholera in Germany.

Page 2.

At the request of the residents entered the house of Blake & Gordon, Madison and Market streets, while the owners of goods were meeting, and with desperate hold and pushed Mr. Gordon out of the store.

left Washington last night for North Adams, Mass.

Clarence Mackay began the inquiry into the causes of the wreck of the 2400 ton were killed by the fall of the elevator in the American Tract Society Building.

George Gould-Miller was arrested for violating the law as to owners hats in public places. "The Cat and the Cherub" Wood and Fields are announced to appear on a regular charge.

George P. Near of Worcester, Mass., made the address of welcome at the National Conference of Unitarian and other Christian Churches in Saratoga. The Rev. Edgar J. Jones was ordered the sum of

Page 10.

Fighting cats at Greenpoint, L. I., resulted in a dog being upset, and the owner's coat of James Jackson was burned.

The wheat market yesterday was weak and nervous. An exception and increasing supply, heavy Northwestern receipts, and bearish crop features were the controlling influences.

Page 13.

The remodeled cruiser Chicago will be Dunsmuir from the dry dock at the Brooklyn Navy Yard to-day.

William McAvoy, the escaped committee of the Seventh Regiment, returned to the City voluntarily in time to prevent a charge of desertion.

Dr. Stephen Smith was appointed a Commissioner of Charities, to succeed Oliver C. Cyril, who has been appointed Surveyor of the Port.

In the will of Dr. Alhambra of Jersey

TO AVENGE HER HUSBAND

The Widow of Dr. Rizal Here to Secure Aid for the Patriots in the Philippines.

HER WORK IN PHILADELPHIA

Arrangements Made for Expeditions and Supplies and an Agreement for Mutual Assistance Concluded with the Cuban Junta.

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 21.—Mrs. Josefina Cecilia Rizal-Taviera, widow of Dr. Jose Rizal, who was butchered by Gen. Polavieja on Dec. 6, 1896, is now in Philadelphia. Dr. Rizal was the acknowledged leader and instigator of the revolution in the Philippines, which had been smoldering since 1896. As the President of Manila University, he was hounded and tortured by the residents of the island. Religious persecution and the atrocious fact of cruelties that are familiar to Cubans and Philippine historians finally were too severe for Dr. Rizal to bear. He was instrumental in

soldiers for the local authorities here, owing to the prevalence of yellow fever in Cuba.

DROP IN STOCKS DUE TO CUBA.

Spanish Fours Go Down in London and Paris and Americans in Sympathy.

LONDON, Sept. 21.—The Pall Mall Gazette this afternoon, commenting in its financial article on the fall of three-quarters of Spanish fours on heavy sales for continental account, says:

"The bonds have already high swing in the markets of Paris, which was backed up, but probably the conditions will be changed by the action of the United States in regard to Cuba. Spain evidently cannot wage war with America, but the cession of the Spanish colonies of Cuba may lead to disasters at Madrid, and if Spain defaults the French bondholders will be left very sore."

The Evening Standard attributes the fall in prices on the Stock Exchanges to the revolt in Cuba and the Philippines in connection with the Cuban insurrection.

BERLIN, Sept. 21.—The drawers of the Berlin and Frankfort Stock Exchanges to-day was the weakness of American securities, due to the report of The Times of Paris yesterday in a dispatch from San Sebastian, that the United States had practically sent an ultimatum to Spain, notifying that country, through the American Minister, Gen. Stewart L. Woodford, of its intention to intervene in Cuba if the Spanish Government is not successful by the end of October.

LONDON, Sept. 21.—Consols declined late to-day Spanish to fell, owing to the

WILD WEST ON EAST SIDE

Robbers with Drawn Revolvers Boldly Invade a Drug Store and Plunder the Proprietor.

SOUGHT THE CASH DRAWER

Quietly Walked Away When Interrupted and Disappeared with Mr. Gordon's Fluted Watch and a Small Sum of Money.

A raid on Gotham on this ever made in the fair Heart was successfully and safely executed this evening in the heart of the most crowded part of New York.

The scene was the drug store of Flake & Gordon, at the northeast corner of Market and Madison Streets, on the lower east side. Aaron Gordon, a partner of the firm, was in the store at 7:45 o'clock with a young woman clerk. It was hardly dark, and people were streaming along all the sidewalks on both Madison and Market Streets at the rate of several hundred a minute.

The front door stands on Market Street

PLUCKY WOMAN IN MU

She Makes an Ineffectual Effort to Drown Her Wheel, Settle

NEWARK, N. J., Sept. 21.—Mis Dobbins, a young business living at Street, was pedaled this morning was hurrying from Keane ones dyes on her bicycle by an inebriated ped was driving recklessly. By a to the young woman escaped injury, rear wheel of her machine was to the dress guard was destroyed.

The Station was driving off leaving Miss Dobbins ordered him to stop did so. Then she demanded $1 as of the property damaged. The Sta have to half when Miss Dobbins ag a policeman the Station, and a to inherit and pass on the spot.

EXCITING FIRE IN PA

Near Persons Slightly Hurt by Five Rescues by Firem

PASSAIC, N. J., Sept. 21.—Eight were caught in the upper floors of t story brick building at Main and Streets by a fire this morning. T started in the cellar and ran up to stairs. Most of the persons escap roof. One of Joseph Jones John Ki adjoins.

Mrs. William Dunham and her were not able to leave their apartm

This front page story in the *New York Times* is surprising because it is not true. Fake news over a century ago.

Beginning with the name of the "widow" of Hozae Rizal all the information published is wrong or imagined yet the article is quite engaging:

> Marina Comenol Orbi had been a student in the university. An attachment has sprung up between her and President, and on Dec. 4 she went into the thick of the battle to meet her lover, and they were married, with a band of patriots as the only witnesses. Marina returned to Manila and two days later the young husband was captured. The Spanish general visited the prisoner, and offered him life, liberty, and passports for himself and wife if he would persuade the insurgents to yield. Rizal courageously and patriotically refused to buy his freedom at such a price. On Dec. 6 he was led to a stone wall, compelled to kneel, and was shot to death by a file of Spaniards under command of General Polaviejo [Polavieja].
>
> Mrs. Rizal then made up her mind to devote her life to the cause and to avenge her husband. She first went to Japan and there found sympathy and substantial encouragement. Mrs. Rizal is now stopping in the northwestern part of this city where she is the guest of a family thoroughly in sympathy with her cause. Her extraordinary ability manifests itself in her shrewd, secret work.

Many cases of arms and ammunition have been shipped over the trench lines to Canada where they will be forwarded to Japan and ultimately to the patriots in the Philippines.

The Remington Arms Company is said to have sent thousands of rifles and is at work completing more for the same purpose. A band of recruits will be sent from America as soon as they can be collected. The work has all been done so quietly that the presence of Mrs. Rizal in this city has been known only to two or three of her most trusted friends. She has been here a month and not a moment has been spent in idleness.

One of the most important steps yet taken by the Philippine patriots has been their resolution to join forces with Cuba. It is said that Mrs. Rizal has been mainly instrumental in drawing up an agreement by which the Cuban Junta and the Philippine patriots will act in unison. She has been consultant with the most influential Cubans and the result will likely be a bond which will mean much for their advancement. Spain has a foe in Mrs. Rizal who is capable of doing much for the cause of liberty.

Mrs. Rizal will go here to Japan and it is her intention to head the troops in person when she returns to the island. The patriots have been

stirred deeply by the heroism of this woman who is willing to give her life for the cause for which her husband died. The Philippine Insurgents have been fighting at a great disadvantage for want of troops and supplies. With renewed courage and abundant supplies under the inspired leadership of Mrs. Rizal they expect ere long to gain their liberty and force Spain to grant practically the same reforms that Cuba is struggling for. Japan is lending much aid to their cause and is said to be looking with envious eyes over the island.

The expedition which Mrs. Rizal will soon lead from America is the first organized in the United States, but a permanent organization has been formed which will act in conjunction with the Cuban Junta in supplying troops, war munitions and counsel to the forces in the field.

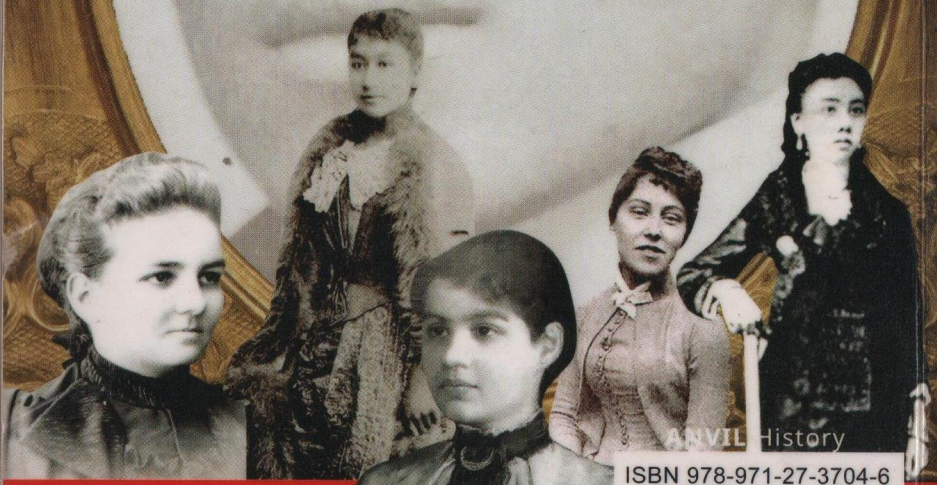
Josephine Bracken is rather well-documented and deserves a book on her own because her story in the Philippines did not end with Rizal's death but continued till the early American occupation of the islands.

LOOKING BACK 16

QUERIDAS DE RIZAL

"Querida , in the Philippines, refers to a mistress. In its original Spanish sense, however, querida/ querido means someone beloved or cherished. It is in this light that I share these essays, as appetizers for the definitive book on Rizal's loves that I will work on in retirement."

—from the introduction



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